



Project MOBISEC is funded by the European Commission
AGREEMENT NUMBER: MOVE/C1/SUB//2011-542/SI.2.609592



MOBISEC

Mobility Initiatives for Sustainable European Communities

Research report about different possibilities to be applied for the safety of cyclists and pedestrians, and technical measures to promote the use of bicycles from the point of view of security - **Deliverable 2.1**

January 2013



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Introduction

This report highlights the different characteristics of each of the partner cities and their approaches to the future of sustainable transport in their areas. The report demonstrates the role that MOBISEC will help play in developing a sustainable approach to the common problems of congestion, air quality and highway safety, by improving conditions for and encouraging cyclists.

In encouraging the use of cycles, a common barrier is the perception of safety on the road, particularly amongst young people and new users. This report highlights the measures that have been explored by each partner in overcoming these barriers

Murcia, a city in South-Eastern Spain, is the capital and most populous city of the Autonomous Community of the Region of Murcia, and the seventh largest city in the Spain, with a population of 442,000 inhabitants in 2010 (about one third of the total population of the Region).

The population of the metropolitan area was close to 700.000 in 2010. It is located on the Segura River, in the Southeast of the Iberian Peninsula, noted by a mild climate with hot summers, tepid winters and scarce precipitation. Murcia was founded by the emir of Cordoba Abd ar-Rahman II in 825 AD with the name Mursiya and is now mainly a services city and a university town.

The city, as the capital of the comarca Huerta de Murcia is called Europe's orchard due to its long agricultural tradition and as a fruits, vegetables and flowers producer and exporter. The best known and most dominant aspect of the municipal area's landscape is the orchard. Urban zones had a great expansion in the last 10-15 years. The rest of the municipal area is made up of different landscapes: badlands, groves of Carrasco pine trees in the pre-coastal mountain ranges and, towards the south, a semi-steppe region. A large regional park, the Parque Regional de Carrascoy y el Valle, lies just in the South of the city.

Murcia City council has recently launched an ambitious new initiative called "Plan Murcia 30", which aims to reduce speed limits within the city. Converting the core streets of the city to a 30 km per hour zone form part of a European initiative promoted by pedestrians, cyclists, and the families of those who have suffered road traffic accidents, along with

social ecological associations who campaign for a reduction of the speed limit in towns for the following 4 main reasons:

- To reduce the number of cyclists and pedestrians knocked over in residential areas.
- Encourage more sustainable ways of getting about such as on foot or by bike
- With less pollution, life is healthier
- If demand is reduced, we save energy0kph, offering greater safety to cyclists and pedestrians as well as improving their coexistence with vehicles.

The “Plan Murcia 30” is a municipal initiative which completes the “Plan Director de la Bicicleta” which aims to create a total strategy for improving environmentally friendly transport in the city and encouraging more people to use eco-friendly transport such as bicycles, by strategies such as the creation of a network of car parks, both open air and underground. MOBISEC will play an important role in delivering this strategy to the citizens of Murcia. Whilst a relatively small project in isolation, when linked to other initiatives it will help deliver the Plan Murcia 30.

Ultimately the aim of these measures is to improve the air quality of the city, with less smoke, less noise and fewer accidents creating a healthier environment for its citizens, be they pedestrians or cyclists.

Varna is located on the bank of the Black sea, deep in Varna valley. Thanks to its geographical position Varna became the real bridge between Europe and Asia. Around 35 % of import and 50 % of export of Bulgaria pass through Varna.

The city of Varna – population 325,137, is situated in the Bay of Varna, 470 km east of Sofia. Varna is the biggest city at the Bulgarian Black Sea coast. Varna's length is over 11 km, its width including the new residential district in nearly 9km. The city stands in tiers and follows the curves of the Bay of Varna. It is surrounded by lots of gardens, vineyards and deciduous groves. Almost the whole territory is occupied by private country houses and small farms. The city is a regional centre.

Today Varna is the third largest city of Bulgaria, after Sofia and Plovdiv. It's also considered to be the sea capital of Bulgaria and is a large

administrative, industrial, cultural and touristic center of Bulgaria. The efficient system of public transport in the resort zones and suburbs, the international airport, railway and sea stations, a wide network of shops, promote a big flow of the tourists from all the world. In Varna region the leading branches of the Bulgarian economy are concentrated: mechanical engineering, shipbuilding, chemical industry, sea and air transport, food and light industry.

More than 20 % of the population of Varna are students, which study at five universities, business institute, economic, polytechnic, medical institutes, college of the international tourism, sailing school. It should be noted that the young people are recognised as those most likely to use cycling as a means of transport.

The city is divided by law into five boroughs (each with its mayor and council: Asparuhovo, Mladost, Odessos (the historic centre), Primorski (the largest one with official population of 102,000 also comprising the seaside resorts north of the city centre), and Vladislav Varchenchik. The boroughs are composed of various districts with distinctive characters and histories. According to the *Financial Times*, "A new city master plan, due to be launched in 2010 will be a 21st-century take on a long standing historical masterplan. Varna has ambitious plans that will allow for a major redevelopment of the port site [with] luxury homes, hotels, restaurants.¹ The quay streets of the new waterfront are deemed important for opening the urbanscape to the sea as most of the coast is framed by parks.

The public transit system ([map](#)) is extensive and reasonably priced, with over 80 local and express bus, local trolleybus, and fixed-route minibus lines. However the city is developing a more strategic sustainable transport plan that will place sustainability at its heart. It is the first time that this approach has been used and MOBISEC will play a key role in raising the profile of cycling as a sustainable transport option. From the meetings already held, Varna have expressed a keen interest in the approaches being used not just in developing MOBISEC but also in integrating it into a sustainable transport strategy.

Oldham is a metropolitan borough of Greater Manchester with a population of 220,000. This is the smallest of the MOBISEC partners however as explained Oldham is part of the Greater Manchester area which has a population of 2.7million.

The borough is named after its largest town (Oldham) but also includes the towns of Chadderton, Failsworth, and Royton, the village of Lees, and the parishes of Shaw and Crompton, and Saddleworth.

Oldham is in the North East of the Greater Manchester City Region. The borough spans 55 miles² (142 km²) from the eastern edge of the city of Manchester to the Pennine hills. Oldham benefits from a high-quality rural and semi-rural environment, including a quarter of the borough lying within the Peak District National Park, perfect cycling environments. Oldham has a mixture of high-density urban areas, suburbs, semi-rural, and rural locations, and is in a pivotal position between the cities of Manchester and Leeds.

Trains run directly to Manchester Victoria in under 30 minutes, and onwards to the national networks, from Greenfield station in Saddleworth. **Metrolink** The Metrolink stop at Oldham Mumps provides great connectivity to Manchester city centre and beyond, with trams every 12 minutes. By 2014, the Metrolink tram network will be extended to Oldham town centre, incorporating the town into the UK's largest tram network.

Buses Oldham Bus Station provides a transport hub at the heart of the town centre. Combined with a network of quality bus corridors, this enables frequent bus services to be offered across the borough, including express bus services every 10 minutes into Manchester city centre.

The Greater Manchester Local Sustainable Transport Fund provides a unique opportunity for the Greater Manchester partners and Government to work together towards the shared objective of delivering a new low carbon economy.

The local transport plan places smarter choices and active travel strategies at the core of the sub-region's approach to delivering its objectives alongside the delivery of the large public transport infrastructure projects that the Greater Manchester Authorities have committed nearly £1 billion towards through the Greater Manchester Transport Fund agreement.

This Commuter Cycle Project is the first stage of an ambitious programme that will address local communities' economic and low

carbon needs through a programme of active travel, sustainable travel promotion and local accessibility measures.

The *Greater Manchester Commuter Cycle Project* will increase the number of people cycling to work and will be delivered through a series of interventions that are targeted at improving: the provision of secure cycle parking, lockers and showers to open up cycling as a genuine commuting option for many more employees; the provision of cycling information and promotional support to build confidence with users of the scheme and to break through barriers that currently hold people back from commuting by bike; and access to, and cycle facilities at, rail, bus and Metrolink stations for onward commuter travel, so as to establish cycling as a key part of our integrated transport system.

In a similar approach to that of Murcia with its Plan Murcia 30, MOBISEC in Oldham is a key part of this much more strategic approach to increased numbers of cyclists, improved air quality and reduced congestion on our roads

Over the last five years Oldham has seen a transformation in its school provision with a number of new state of the art schools opening replacing older unsuitable facilities. At the heart of the provision was an improvement to access arrangements that now makes it easier for pupils to either walk or cycle to school. MOBISEC is an integral part of developing new approaches in encouraging cycling as an option (given Oldham's notoriously bad weather) for students.

Summary

It is interesting to note the commonalities between the approaches being adopted within each of the partner cities in MOBISEC. All three see MOBISEC not as a unique scheme that will provide some improvements to cycling in the city but as a project that is part of a comprehensive strategic programme that will develop and deliver a sustainable approach to improving a range of problems that have arisen from an over reliance on cars. The following sections provide the detail behind each partner's approaches to the issues that their cities face.