



ENABLING CYCLING CITIES INGREDIENTS FOR SUCCESS

INTERVIEW WITH JUAN CARLO APARICIO

Lord Mayor of the City of Burgos.





Juan Carlo Aparicio

Lord Mayor of the City of Burgos

BURGOS

Interview by **Oliver Hatch**, Urbrans.org

The city has been experimented a transformation during the last five-six years. Thanks partly to the CiViTAS initiative and because of the policies implemented in favour of the bike, Burgos has become the second Spanish City in terms of the use of the bicycle. In terms of facilities, Burgos has done all the possible efforts in order to promote it, as more than 110 km of bike lane (being the first Spanish city in terms of km per inhabitant), 300 new bike racks installed or a bicycle loan system with more than 20 points. As a result, Burgos has moved from a residual 0.4% use of the bike up to 4%.

In your view, how important is political support and commitment for pro-cycling policies?

It is more than important, it is crucial.

Have you a particular success story you can describe in respect of this?

Burgos wasn't particularly a city where you could see lots of cyclists. Despite the people had two or more bicycles per household, and the good conditions to use them (plain, not very rainy) the city had no tradition for commuting with this more sustainable mean of transport. Thanks to the CiViTAS project, and the policy in favour of the bike, we can proudly say that in only few years (four-five) the City has become the second Spanish city in terms of the use of the bike achieving a 3,8% of the total from a residual 0,4% in 2006.

Is a well-planned and steady flow of finance for cycling measures necessary?

Despite the poor situation the measure in order to favour the bicycle have been maintained in time in order to install more bike parking racks, improve the bike lane or to follow up with the dissemination.

What is the position of cycle planning within your wider land-use and transport policies?

The bike has started to be very important in terms of land planning, as an example we can consider that the new developments include the bike lane and the obligation of the bike parking in the buildings. Also in the refreshments of the old down town everything in order to favour the bicycle has been done.

Does you city have a cycling department or team and if so, how vital are they in promoting cycling?

The city of Burgos was one of the first Spanish cities to count with a proper mobility department, being in charge of the bicycle promotion.

Do you consult with your cycle user groups and neighbourhood groups on cycling and how useful are their views and their role?

Yes, with both, and also with the University, at student and expert level. We can proudly say that the collaboration has been absolutely fruitful; the bike rack used in the city was designed by the local bicycle association, i.e.

How necessary for cycling is it that different city departments cooperate and work together?

Quite necessary, at least planning and architectural department, civil engineering or even industrial engineering must collaborate and work together if the city wants to achieve a common objective.

Has your city been able to learn and adapt ideas from other cities for cycling - if so, how?

Yes, thanks basically from CiViTAS we had the opportunity to observe how the policies were implemented at technical level (bike lanes, traffic lights, facilities..) and also at soft measures level as dissemination, marketing or promotion.

To what extent do your city transport planners listen to the views of residents on cycling?

Very much, as it has explained in the new areas the inclusion of the bike is mandatory and also in the refurbishments in the old down town.

How does your city balance the provision of 'hard' measures for cycling (infrastructure) with the provision of 'soft' measures such as maps and promotion measures?

Basically during the last years both sides have been responded at budgetary level. Maybe the financial restrictions are going to make that the bike measure will be more focusing to the soft measures.

How necessary are the communications and marketing of cycling initiatives to all your city residents?

Clearly very much. There are some messages that need to be properly targeted to certain citizen groups.

Why is cycling important to you and your city?

Because it means modernity, healthy and a vibrant and lively city with people moving sustainably.

How did you become convinced that cycling has an important role in your city?

It was only necessary to think some years ago how the majority of people moved and how the modern life made us unnecessarily dependent on the car.

If you had one recommendation to make to another city starting to plan for bicycles, what would it be?

Plan everything including the bicycle in your thoughts, the city is for everybody but think who you want to give priority and how you want your city be organized. The bicycle is also a mid term success, the citizens convinced themselves bit by bit. Once they start, nevertheless, more and more people join the initiative, we don't think ever the rate of people biking is going to decrease.

The interviews were taken by Oliver Hatch,
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THIS INTERVIEW IS PART OF 'ENABLING CYCLING CITIES: INGREDIENTS FOR SUCCESS'

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