

# The **Acceptability** of **Cycling**

in **Mexico City** and **London**

**Preliminary Results**

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14 Jan. 2014

# Outline

- Context of the project
- The Project
- Methodology
- Acceptability
- Mexico City
- London
- Common ground
- Differences
- Lessons – Why should we care?
- Questions/Discussion?

# The Context

- Research Master **Urban** Studies at the University of **Amsterdam** - Specialization in **Transport Planning**
- Challenge of **urban transport** and **sustainability**
  - Urgency due to pollution, congestion, health, speed and more
  - **Cycling** as one mode that positively contributes in all areas

# The Project

What is the role of *acceptability* in *cycling*-based mobility *transitions*?

# The Project

## GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

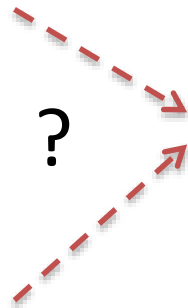


"Calles completas"

## CIVIL SOCIETY INITIATIVES



Paseo de Todos



## ACCEPTABILITY

Of public policies for the bike  
Of less car use  
Of seeing and showing respect to more cyclists  
By policy makers  
By citizens / users

?



## CYCLING TRANSITION



?

# Methodology

- Key interviews
  - Top-down initiatives
  - Bottom-up initiatives
  - (Academic) Experts
- Participant observation
- Media analysis
- Document analysis

...in two cities

# Acceptability

- *Acceptability*

Willingness to accept a certain development or change, if not for oneself directly, then for others...

- *Acceptability*

...under certain conditions.

# Personal Acceptability of Cycling

- Am I personally willing to accept that cycling increases around me (or will I cycle myself)?
- Am I personally willing to accept giving space to cycling when I am not cycling myself (e.g. give room while driving or lose a parking space)



# Societal Acceptability of Cycling

- Do others around me accept cycling?
- Am I the oddball when I accept cycling or when I reject it?

# The Cases



- Mexico City (Metropolitan Area)
  - Size: 9,560 km<sup>2</sup>
  - Density: 2213/km<sup>2</sup>
  - Population: ca. 21 Million
  - Ca. 1% Bike-use
  - Ca. 21% Car-use
  - Ecobici + more
  - Congestion! Air-quality! Sustainability!



- London (Metropolitan Area)
  - Size: 8,382 km<sup>2</sup>
  - Density: 1550/km<sup>2</sup>
  - Population: ca. 13 Million
  - Ca. 2% Bike-use
  - Ca. 36% Car-use
  - Barclays Bikes + more
  - Congestion! Air-quality! Sustainability!

# Cycling in Mexico City





# Cycling in Mexico City





# Cycling in London



# Commonalities

## (Preliminary)

- Increase in cycling (especially in middle classes)
- **Male**-dominated, some recognition this should change
- Link with **leisure/sports** cycling and **child's** activity
- **Deaths** highlighted with white bikes
- (Perceived) **Danger** of cycling
- Recognition of importance of **infrastructure** and **segregation** but **not high quality** produced
- **Top-down** initiatives generally considered most important to reach higher acceptability levels

# Differences (Preliminary)

- More **small-scale bottom-up** initiatives in Mexico City
- More **complex** organization of top-down transport planning in London
- ‘Need to **prioritize infrastructure!**’ --  
‘Need to **prioritize education!**’
- Possibly different levels of **stigmatization** against cycling, influencing acceptability

# Lessons – Why should we **care**?

## (Preliminary)

- Cycling is on the **rise – despite** a LOT of problems
  - Little societal acceptability (but increase...politics)?
  - Increasing personal acceptability?
- **Government-led** projects are most desired
  - **Quality** over quantity?
- **Identification** with cycling?
- **Acceptability** needs a ‘low’ before it can reach a ‘high’?
  - Role of **bottom-up** initiatives?



# QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

Sources of photos: all but two by Kim C. v. Schönfeld; one from eltoque.com, one by Maritza Montero

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