



EcoMobility



PRIORITY FOR ECOMOBILITY IN OUR CITIES. A SERIES OF LOCAL STORIES

Bologna, Italy Reducing car traffic to protect city heritage

Summary: Inhabitants of Bologna are proud of the city's historical nature. Bologna residents and the local government have worked together to protect the heritage. A law disallowing pollution-emitting cars from the city center and infrastructure for bikers and pedestrians allow residents a safe and efficient way to travel the city and avoid damaging the city's culture.

A car-free city center

In the last decade, there was a significant increase in the number of cars entering the city center on a daily basis. This increase caused traffic chaos because more cars were entering the city than the roads allowed. Eighty percent of the city center has been converted to a pollution-limiting area and car traffic is strictly controlled. Only residents of this zone, public transport vehicles and drivers of electric cars may receive a permanent permit to drive in the restricted zone. Private cars can buy day tickets for 5€ or a four-day ticket for 12€. There is a limit of three one-day tickets or one four-day ticket per vehicle per month to limit the overall number of trips in the city. Suppliers wishing to enter the city center may purchase a one-year permit at a cost of 25€ to 100€ depending on the level of pollution their vehicle emits. With these restrictions, the yearly number of vehicles entering the city center has decreased more than 25%.



Public Transport in the Historic City of Bologna

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Commuter statistics

Of the one million residents of the metropolitan area of Bologna, 650,000 of them live in what is referred to as the "commuter belt". With a per capita vehicle ownership rate of 522 cars per 1,000 residents (compared to the 601 cars per 1,000 residents in Italy, second rate in the World), the city must have sufficient infrastructure to allow the residents without cars to get to their destinations and to reduce the number of residents with cars driving to their destination. The city of Bologna has a transportation modal share of 28% car drivers, 7% car passengers, 26% public transit users, 21% pedestrians, 11% motorcycle drivers, and 7% bicyclists.

A major participant of European mobility week

The city of Bologna is a strong participant in European mobility week, which aims to make citizens more sensitive to the effects of a rise in urban traffic, such as increasing pollution. The program stresses ways to reduce this traffic (and subsequently the emissions) in order to improve the quality of life in the city. Another goal of this week is to make the public more aware of public transit and infrastructure available to pedestrians and bicyclists and to discuss investment in new infrastructure. The program requests that local authorities prioritize alternative transport modes by following certain guidelines. Examples include planning the city so residents do not have to travel as often or as far as they currently do, to make safe routes through the city for pedestrians and bikers, and to work with local schools and businesses to establish better travel plans. The edition of 2010 saw the active and enthusiastic participation of more than 3,000 citizens.

An overview of the bus system

Bologna has a limited public transportation system, if compared to the best European cities but one that is widely used. The bus network contains routes from the metropolitan area through the city center. This simplifies the system for customers by reducing the number of changes customers need to make. The system also contains two circular lines to transport customers within the city. Most buses run once every five minutes. Almost the whole bus fleet is monitored by means of Automatic Vehicles Monitoring system and the schedule of buses and real-time tracking information are communicated to riders at many bus stops.

A city fit for pedestrians and bicyclists

Pedestrians in Bologna may take advantage of 45 km of covered streets. These creates a pleasant environment for commuters wishing to avoid the sun and the rain. To further increase the share of pedestrians, Bologna plans to extend the pedestrian area towards the university neighborhood. This link would create a walking environment throughout most of the city. The city also promotes bicycles as an alternative to cars. In the last four years, the city has created 128 km of safe, well-recognized bike paths along 14 different routes. The city strives to significantly increase the share of cyclists. To boost it, a new bike-sharing system, based on magnetic card technology, will soon be implemented in the city to make available more than 1,000 bicycles to all citizens. Such a new system will run beside the already existing one based on mechanical technology and specifically targeted to commuters. The city hopes these measures will increase the appeal of cycling as an viable alternative to traveling by more motorised and pollutant vehicles.



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Bicycles for Bologna

“It’s time for government and citizens to work together for a new concept of mobility. We all have to learn how to move better to live in better cities „

- Mauro Borioni, Bologna Transportation Department



Bologna, Italy

The City of Bologna is the seventh largest city in Italy and the capital of the region of Emilia-Romagna in Northern Italy. The metropolitan area has a population of approximately one million people. The city has a density of 2,700 people per km². It is known for its historic center and university. The economy of Bologna is industrial and is based on footwear, textiles, and engineering. Bologna has been an ICLEI member since December 1992.

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