



Problem Statement

Almost half of the German population rarely or never use their bike for commuting or leisure trips. This contrasts with only 13.4% not owning a bike, pointing to interesting contradictions between bicycle ownership and use (infas et al. 2010). Reasons for not using the bike are manifold, including **infrastructural issues**, **socio-cultural norms** about mode use and related aspects of **mobility socialization**, and **personal factors** such as shifts in people's **mobility biography relating to major life events**. Infrastructural deficits continue to affect people's willingness to cycle, such as gaps in cycling infrastructure and safety concerns around junction design. Similarly, social and cultural norms prevail that prioritise car use. Personal factors such as fitness levels, age and gender influence people's propensity towards selecting an active mode of travel.



Life Events

Social-scientific evidence exists that changes in mobility practices coincide with **key life events** including childbirth, marriage and retirement (Rau & Manton 2016). In particular, residential relocation and job changes have been shown to impact mobility practices.

The term '**mobility milestones**' refers to mobility-related life events that significantly influence people's mobility practices, such as getting a driving licence, being involved in a traffic accident, or the acquisition of cycling skills.



Mobility Milestones

RadAktiv contributes to the advancement of knowledge about barriers to cycling and furthers the development of recommendations for future pro-cycling strategies. To achieve these twin goals, the project adopts a transdisciplinary, two-step research design that connects research with more applied, policy-focused work that involves local practice partners in the Munich region as well as former non-cyclists. The research part delivers the **first-ever encompassing typology of non-cyclists and their barriers for Germany**. The project builds on a **biographical perspective** that draws explicit attention to life events that may change modal choice. This interest in people's mobility biographies is mirrored in its methodological approach, which focuses on **life events and 'mobility milestones'** that involve a modal shift away from cycling.



Research Objectives



Research Design

Phase I:
Qualitative interviews with experts and non-cyclists.
Identification of barriers and motivation.

Phase II:
A representative survey in Germany.
Development of a typology of non-cyclists.

Phase III:
Development of measures to activate non-cyclists based on Phase I and II data and results of workshops with experts and (former) non-cyclists.

The following three typical cases show the diversity of non-cyclists as well as their different potentials of reactivation:

Case 1:

Martina Maier was ill during childhood and was thus not allowed to ride a bicycle. In adulthood, she used public transport or a car for all trips. However, Martina Maier always felt strange about not mastering something as 'normal' as cycling. That's why she attended a cycling school a year ago. Since then, Martina Maier has used the bicycle for leisure and utility trips, even for commuting. This said, she still feels insecure when cycling in the city.

Case 2:

Sarah Schmid learned to cycle as a child and even used to cycle to primary school. This stopped when she changed to secondary school. Because Sarah Schmid lived in a rural area, she used public transport for the trip to secondary school. At the age of 18 she switched to driving her own car. Even moving to a big city did not change her mobility practices. Today Sarah Schmid mainly uses public transport or the car and considers cycling to be dangerous and strenuous, making it unlikely that she'll switch to cycling in the future.

Case 3:

Hilde Huber learned to ride a bicycle as a child and also cycled in her youth. After getting a driving licence, however, she used the bicycle less and less. With the birth of the first child and the purchase of a second car, Hilde Huber stopped cycling altogether. Because of her location in a rural area, she uses her own car for commuting and shopping. However, her partner cycles a lot and she plans to join him after retirement.



Preliminary Findings

infas, DLR (eds), 2010. Mobilität in Deutschland 2008. Ergebnisbericht. Struktur – Aufkommen – Emissionen – Trends. Projekt-Nr. 70.801/2006. Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Bau und Stadtentwicklung. Bonn und Berlin.
Rau, H., Manton, R., 2016. Life events and mobility milestones: Advances in mobility biography theory and research. Journal of Transport Geography 52, 51-60.

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