

Report ThinkBike Workshop Wien

23 January, 2013

Report by Marjolein de Lange, Dutch Cycling Embassy

City of Vienna, Embassy of the Netherlands in Vienna



ThinkBike workshop

Wednesday 23 January 2013, the Dutch Cycling Embassy organized a ThinkBike workshop in Vienna, Austria. This workshop was commissioned by the Embassy of the kingdom of the Netherlands in Vienna, and realized in cooperation with the city of Vienna. The program of the workshop be found in Appendix 1.

The objective of a ThinkBike workshop is to explain to local traffic professionals the development and impact of cycling in the Netherlands and to have them experience how Dutch bicycle-inclusive traffic planning works. This is achieved by tentatively implementing Dutch traffic planning principles in local traffic situations.

The Vienna ThinkBike workshop focused on cycling facilities in Maria Hilferstrasse and at some junctions. Also bicycle parking was a theme that was covered in the workshop.

This report is written in English, however the workshop was done in German. A translation in correct German is not feasible at this point. Some parts are in German as they come from original German input.

The workshop was opened by Ursula Zappe (MD-BD) and Martin Blum (Radbeauftragter) of the city of Vienna. Some 25 traffic professionals took part in the workshop. They were officers of different departments of the city of Vienna.

The workshop was given by the Dutch team that consisted of Ineke Spapé, of the Dutch traffic academy NHTV, Natasja Boekel of Jan Kuipers Nunspeet and Ron Bissels of Velopa, both bicycle parking manufacturers, and Marjolein de Lange of the Dutch Cycling Embassy.

1. Presentations

An introduction of the Dutch way of bicycle-inclusive planning and design was given in several presentations by the Dutch team.

1.1 Past, present and future of Cycling in the Netherlands

The workshop started with an introduction to the development of cycling in the Netherlands. Cycling was a transport mode that was very well used up till the 1940's but from the 1950's it degraded to a vehicle that was badly taken care of and pushed aside by the upcoming car. The growing motorization led to huge road danger and hindrance for cyclists and thus decreasing levels of cycling. This process happened in many other countries. But the developments in the Netherlands are different from other countries in a rediscovery of the bicycle as a serious means of (urban) transport since the 1970's. This change happened at first as a result of civil outrage about the road danger and the growing amount of space that cars were using up in cities. Organizations such as *'Stop de Kindermoord'* ('Stop the Child murder' with a focus on road danger for children) and *Fietzersbond* (Cyclists' Union) played an important role in these protests.

The public demand for better road safety and restraining the car in the city was adopted by politicians and this led step by step to a traffic policy that paid more attention to the interests of cyclists, pedestrians and road safety. In the process of rediscovering the bicycle in modern urban traffic situations there was an important place for examples and research to find out which facilities worked best. By implementing good bicycle infrastructure step by step cycling became an integral part of traffic and urban planning. Since then the Dutch have strived to make cycling safe and attractive for all. In this process, the Netherlands developed a growing knowledge base, with a lot of examples and expertise about cycling, bicycle-inclusive planning and policy for cycling.

This has been a process of decades that is still going on. Redesigning cities into bicycle cities has to be done street by street. But it has had great results: high levels of cycling, lower levels of car use in cities and better road safety for cyclists. At present the Dutch are facing new challenges such as how to facilitate really high volumes of cyclists, both on the roads and in parking facilities.

1.2 Bicycle Basics

The principles for designing for cyclists were explained in a presentation about the basic aspects of cycling: the ergonomics of cycling and the physical and mental possibilities and limitations of cyclists. These lead to design recommendations about widths, curves, pavement, etc. for cycling facilities. And to the basis for the Dutch road design principles of Sustainable Safety. The idea of Sustainable Safety is to design streets in such a way that they fit the possibilities and limitations of road users. Where speeds are high this means cyclists should be

separated from cars, when there is no separation between cyclists and cars speeds should be low and the number of cars as well.

1.3 Bicycle-inclusive planning and road design

What are the implications of the physical and mental aspects of cyclists for road design and urban planning, and what can be added to urban quality when more attention and space is given to cycling (and walking) and less to cars? These questions were addressed in a presentation about bicycle-inclusive planning and design. It introduced the main quality requirements for bicycle facilities and the ideas of Sustainable Safety. Also the benefits of cycling (and walking) for cities and examples of "space making" were covered.

1.4 Bicycle parking

The Dutch expertise on bicycle parking was covered in a presentation, given by Natasja Boekel and Ron Bissels jointly. It focused on the need for a consistent policy for bicycle parking and the possible parking solutions for bicycles.

2. The cases of Vienna:

After the presentations the workshop turned to elaborating some particular bicycle cases in Vienna. Because some of these cases are at present in political debate the discussion and results of the workshop on this part cannot be included in this public part of the report.

3. Cycling in Vienna from a Dutch perspective

There are quite some good bicycle facilities in Vienna. And Vienna has a vision, guidelines about how to design facilities for cyclists. But at the same time it is not unusual that at difficult points, where it is narrow and lanes for cars are "needed" bicycle facilities sometimes suddenly stop. The same goes for busy shopping streets that lack bicycle facilities.

The bicycle paths are rather narrow, compared to Dutch standards. In the Netherlands the principle is that cyclists can ride side by side. In Austria this is not allowed. For a perspective of growing numbers of cyclists, as can be expected in Vienna, the narrow cycle paths may lead to problems when people want to pass one another, or at traffic lights where there is not enough space for all the cyclists to wait.

Public transport in Vienna is very good and most citizens own a public transport card. In wintertime many cyclists seem to stow away their bicycle and turn to public transport or car instead.

Vienna has many large roads running right into the city centre with many lanes. These high volumes of cars cause problems in the city: not only large streets with many lanes to cross but also fewer space for cyclists and pedestrians. AND all the cars on one street go to other streets where they also ask for space and may cause traffic jams etc.

If it would be possible to replace part of the car traffic by bicycle it would result in more "space" in the whole system. One lane of 3,5m can carry about 2000 cars per hour. The same lane can carry about 15.000 cyclists. This is 7 times more efficient. By bicycles many more people can move in the city than if they would go by car. Here is the great advantage of cycling for the city.

Winter maintenance in Vienna was quite well at many bicycle paths. At the time of the workshop Vienna was covered in snow and most bicycle paths were quite well cleaned. Bicycle lanes however were in more trouble because many of them were partly covered with the heaps of snow that were swiped of the lanes for cars.

Vienna does a good job in providing for the handicapped: tickers and maps with relief on traffic lights for the poor sighted, accessible sidewalks for wheelchairs etc. However, at quite some junctions, and some road stretches as well, the distinction between the bicycle path and the footpath was only indicated by a line. This is a very unclear distinction especially for visually handicapped. A thing that the Dutch did not know about was

the protection for blind people in of bicycle racks. The open space under it may not be higher than 35 cm so that the blind can recognize the racks, even when they are empty.

Vienna has many trams. The rails are a risk for cyclists, especially in the narrow streets.

Other facilities for cyclists:

The public bike rental system in Vienna was in operation at this time of year (January) in some places but not in full use.

There are quite some bicycle repair shops and bicycle shops in Vienna.

Bicycle parking is available at many places in the city. If this is enough is unclear because it was wintertime and it seems that many people had stored their bicycle indoors to wait for better weather.

The city of Vienna has a booklet with some basic design principles and examples. This is handy for officers and politicians.

4. Dutch reference examples

As a reference for the large streets and junctions that can be found in Vienna the following examples in the Netherlands can be interesting. Some pictures are shown here. One can see them in more detail through google maps and streetview: <http://goo.gl/maps/e10IY>

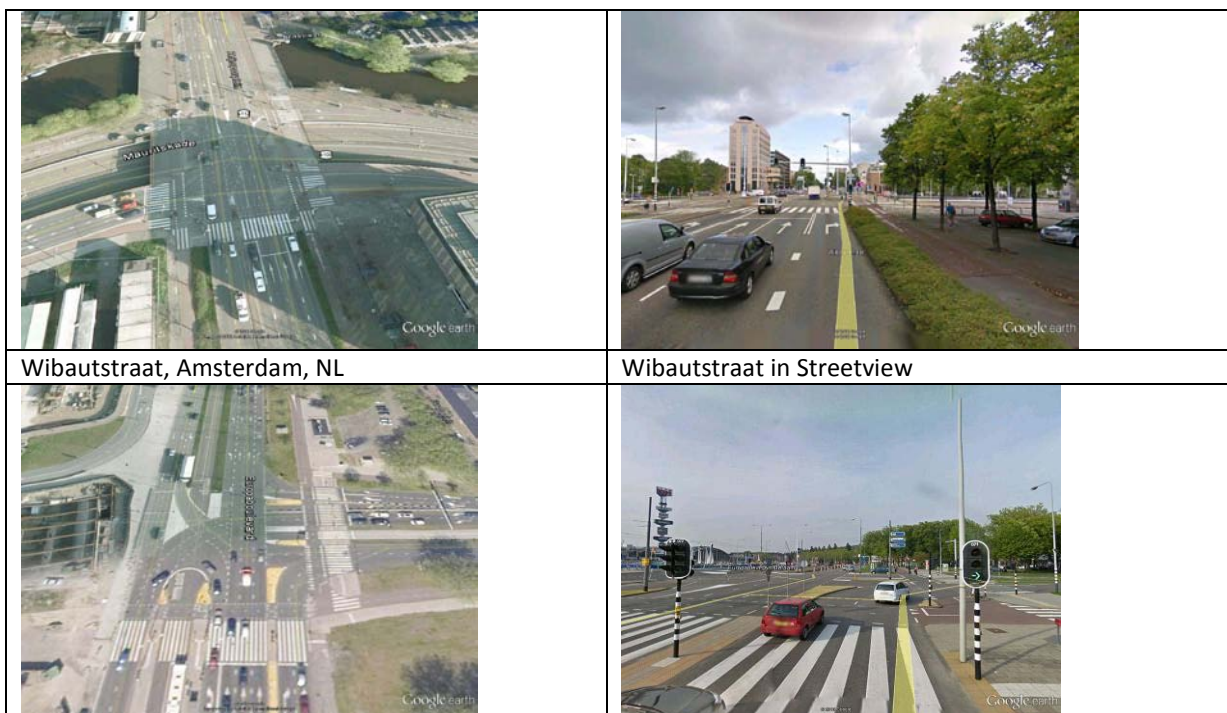
All of these streets have high volumes of cars, multiple lanes (2x2 at sections and more at junctions) and a speed limit of 50km/h or 70km/h. Because of this they have segregated bicycle facilities.



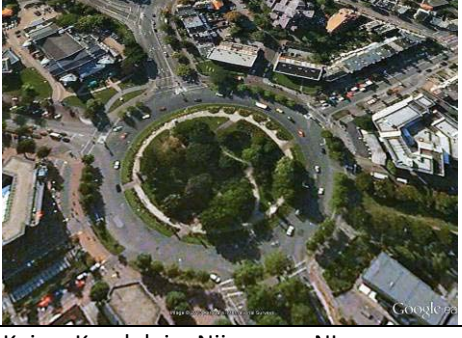



Some of the streets, Europaboulevard and Nieuwe Utrechtsestraat, are close to the motorway but they have much narrower lanes and tighter curves than the motorways. This makes that cars generally drive at a lower speed, more appropriate for the city environment. The narrower curves for cars also leaves better space for the crossings for cyclists and pedestrians.

Speeding will, however, occur on multilane roads outside of peak hours.

Crossing these large streets with high volumes of cars costs quite long waiting time. From the cars perspective the crossings for bicycles and pedestrians reduce the capacity for car traffic and therefore are limited. Hence, these large roads are considerable barriers for cyclists and pedestrians.

However, traffic lights can be adjusted better for cyclists and pedestrians if special attention is paid to it, and not all priority is given to cars.



Europaboulevard, Amsterdam, NL	Europaboulevard in Streetview
	
Nieuwe Utrechtsestraat, Amsterdam NL	Nieuwe Utrechtsestraat in Streetview
	
Keizer Karelplein, Nijmegen, NL	Keizer Karelplein in Streetview
	
Amsterdamse straatweg # Daalsetunnel, Utrecht, NL	Ams. Straatweg # Daalsetunnel in Streetview

If cyclists need to turn left at the junctions of these large streets it generally means they have to do that in two steps, with two traffic lights. This is nearly inevitable on streets with separate bicycle paths. There are some solutions that can help reduce waiting time.

An array of Amsterdam shopping streets that are also important bicycle routes can be found at:

<http://goo.gl/maps/4NFN0>

One can see that even in narrow streets good facilities can be implemented. Either by putting in cycle paths or by reducing the number of cars and sometimes taking out one direction for cars.

There are also some not so well designed streets and sections. Here space is scarce and the political power to reduce car traffic and or car parking is not strong enough.

1. Planning of ThinkBike workshop

The workshop was jointly prepared by two parties:

- The *Dutch Cycling Embassy* mobilized the Dutch cycling experts, conferred with Vienna municipality about the content of the workshop and the local traffic policy, prepared the content of the workshop, led the workshop, organized logistical things for the Dutch team and produced this report. This was done by Marjolein de Lange
- The Embassy of the Netherlands in Vienna provided the funding of the workshop, made contacts with the city of Vienna, organized logistical things, translated some presentations in German, informed the Dutch team about place to stay etc. This was done by Kyra Manders
- The City of Vienna gave input for the content of the workshop, provided the room, the (excellent) catering and other logistics for the workshop, provided background information on traffic in Vienna, recruited the participants for the workshop. This was taken care of by Suzanne Reichard of the Radfahr agentur of Wien.

The workshop took place at Gartenhotel Altmannsdorf in 1120 Wien, Hoffingergasse 26 stattfindet

The Dutch team consisted of :

Ineke Spapé

Ineke Spapé (1958) is a professional urban planner with 30 years experience. The mixture of cyclists (as human beings with influenciable behavior), urban space (and the lack of it) and integrated mobility and urban planning is her specialty. Ineke is associate professor integrated urban and mobility planning at NHTV (University for applied sciences) and senior consultant and director of SOAB, both in Breda (NL).

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Ron Bissels

Ron Bissels is Concept Manager Bicycle Parking at VelopA, Netherlands. Developing new business and supporting sales and operations for the bicycle mobility and bicycle parking activities of VelopA in their European home market. VelopA provides street furniture for public open spaces with bicycle parking one of their main activities.

rbissels@velopa.com | www.velopa.com

Natasja Boekel

Natasja Boekel is export manager at Jan Kuipers Nunspeet. Besides being responsible for international sales and marketing her area of expertise is double tier parking and the associated quality marks.

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Marjolein de Lange

Marjolein de Lange is a specialist in planning and policy for bicycling and road safety, working for both municipalities and for nongovernmental organizations. For the Dutch Cycling Embassy she leads the ThinkBike project. At Fietsersbond Amsterdam, the Cyclists' Union in Amsterdam, she is part of the traffic technical committee and the strategic team.

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Appendix 1 Programm ThinkBike -Workshop Wien

Datum: Mittwoch, 23. Jänner 2013

am: Gartenhotel Altmannsdorf, Hoffingergasse 26-28, Wien

9.00 Begrüßung

Ursula Zappe (MD-BD) und Martin Blum (Radbeauftragter)

9.10 Vorstellung des niederländischen Teams

Marjolein de Lange - Rad-Expertin bei der Dutch Cycling Embassy

Ineke Spapé - Lektorin Traffic and Urban Development , NHTV, Verkehrsakademie

Natasja Boekel, Ron Bissels - Experten Fahrrad-Parken, Fa. Jan Kuipers und Velopa

9.20 Radfahren in den Niederlande als internationales Beispiel

Marjolein de Lange, *Dutch Cycling Embassy*

Geschichte des Radfahrens in den Niederlanden

9.45 Bicycle Basics

Marjolein de Lange, *Dutch Cycling Embassy*

Einblicke in der grundlegende Radverkehrsplanung: Kurven, Breiten, Sicht, Pflasterung etc.

10.15 Radverkehrs-Planung und Design

Ineke Spapé, *NHTV*

Einleitung zur niederländischen Radverkehrsplanung, inkl. Stadtverkehrsplanung: Sicherheit, Fahrradanlagen, Straßenkategorisierung und niederländische Prinzipien für den Radverkehr

10.45 Kaffeepause

11.00 Parken von Fahrrädern

Eine systematische Methode - von Art der Radabstellanlagen bis Politik und Organisation/Betrieb

11.30 Einleitung der Gruppenaufgaben

Bearbeitung von zwei Themen in Gruppen: Kreuzungen und Einkaufsstraßen.

An den Wiener Beispielen sollen die niederländischen Prinzipien geprüft werden.

Beispiele Kreuzungen: Bereich Operngasse, Urania und Maria-Theresien-Straße

Beispiele Straßen: Alserstraße (Gleisanlagen) und Mariahilferstraße

12.30 Mittagspause

13.30 Gruppen-Arbeit

assistiert vom niederländischen Team

inklusive **Kaffeepause**

15.30 Präsentation der Gruppen-Ergebnisse und Diskussion

unter Leitung des niederländischen Teams

17.00 Ende