

FASTER. EASIER. COOLER.



Ten Good Practices from BiTiBi Pilot Projects

January 2016

10 GOOD PRACTICES

WHAT TO DO TO IMPLEMENT A SUCCESSFUL PROJECT

Earlier in the BiTiBi project we published our “Guidelines for Implementing BiTiBi Services”. This guide describes the step-by-step building blocks (BB) to implement services that combine bikes and trains for an efficient and seamless door-to-door trip.

This new leaflet showcases Ten Good Practices created in the five countries involved in the BiTiBi project. These Good Practices are crucial implementation concepts as much as they are small, concrete ideas that contribute to the success of the service. We want to share them because we believe they are worth copy-pasting into other projects.

Get inspired!

For further description of the whole process of implementing BiTiBi services, please read the “Guidelines” on our website: bitibi.eu on the Downloads page.



WHY BITIBI?

Society wants to reduce energy use, CO2 emissions, and create more liveable cities. Using less cars and providing alternative energy-efficient transport modes like bicycle and train are key factors.

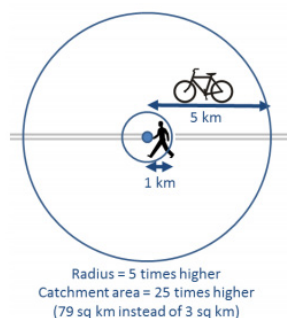
However, a main challenge remains, a train transports people from station to station. Homes and activities are, however, rarely situated at railway stations. The aim of BiTiBi is therefore to get people from door to door - via the railway station. The bicycle will help link the station with both the point of departure (first mile) and the destination (last mile), making trains and railways more attractive. This will, in turn, increase the number of train passengers as well.

There are some further challenges to overcome. In particular, the last mile can be a problem due to the fact that most people don't have access to a bike at their destination station. Buying a bike for the last mile in order to get to your destination is only interesting if you use this bike on a regular basis and if you can park it safely overnight. In addition, taking bikes on trains, especially during peak hours, is problematic for railway operators in some countries.

A solution is to provide enough bike parking at railway stations and offer bike share services, especially for the last mile.

The BiTiBi approach isn't just about the hardware, it also includes marketing, promotion, tariffs and the organization of bike-train solutions. Offering hardware alone won't be enough. People have to be convinced and nudged to use bikes and the BiTiBi offer must be seamless. Integration, communication and promotion are therefore an inextricable part of the BiTiBi approach.

For railway operators, the BiTiBi approach can be a very interesting way to increase passenger numbers, reduce the number of people arriving at the station by car and to create a modal shift to more environmentally-friendly and space-efficient transport forms.



With a bike, the catchment area of a railway station increases by a huge factor. Pedestrians normally walk for distances up to 2 km. On a bicycle they will travel between 5-7 km.

BB1 - Build Safe, Sheltered, Convenient Bike Parking at Train Stations

Connect Bike Parkings and Platforms

The location is the key element to make sure bike parking will be used by cyclists. It is important to place the bike parking as close to the train station as possible. Ideally, the parking facility will be inside the station and offer direct access to the platforms.

If the bike parking facility cannot be built within the station, it is crucial to gain a solid understanding of the access routes and to position it in their “flow”.

From the Dutch experience, we can recommend to install the first rack for smaller stations 10-20 meters from the station entrance. The most distant racks should be placed 50-75 meters away. At larger stations, greater distances are

acceptable if no space is available right next to the entrance. In the Netherlands, a total of 412,000 bike parking spots are available at train stations.

(see the Guidelines for more details about the location of bike parking)



Bike parking opening on platforms

In September 2015, a bike parking facility designed for 90 bicycles was opened at the Como Borghi station outside Milan. In order to create convenient parking which allows cyclists to park their bikes and reach the platforms in a few minutes, the parking is located as close as possible.

Coming from the square in front of the station, cyclists get a direct and easy

access to the parking by the entrance - a door which can be opened with a swipe card - and direct access to the platforms through another door.

While it remains an interesting example of direct connection from the parking to the platforms, it must be mentioned that Como is a rather small train station with only two platforms.

Como
ITALY



BB1- Build Safe, Sheltered, Convenient bike Parking at Train Stations

Free or Secure - Offering the Choice

In order to make the first-mile by bike possible, a safe, sheltered and convenient bike parking facility is necessary at train stations. A good practice noticed in several parking facilities is dividing it in two parts: the main one is safe, free of charge and accessible to everyone whereas the more secure, payment facility is for members only.

It must always be an option to park bikes for free. Offering a paying service for people who would like to park their bikes in a secure space is, however, also relevant. It should be much cheaper than a local bus ticket and both monthly and yearly subscriptions should be made available. This part of the parking facility should be accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

In the Netherlands, we have noticed that most of the indoor parking facilities are guarded by staff or cameras. People have to pay for some of them, whereas others are free of charge. Generally speaking, cyclists in the Netherlands don't really fancy paying to park their bikes and they don't ride very expensive ones. The new state-of-the-art parking (5,190 spaces) at Rotterdam train station provides this dual parking, but it seems to be an exception in the Netherlands. There, while arriving at the entrance, cyclists have the choice between paid parking (staffed by people from the bike shop and costing €1.25/day and €103/year) and an unpaid one (only guarded by cameras). The style of bike racks are the same, only the way to guard it, is different (picture below).



From user experience harvested in the Netherlands and in the United Kingdom, we know that it is of utmost importance to ensure that people do not feel claustrophobic in the facility (cf. Lessons Learned in Utrecht) and to make the door easy to open from the inside (cf. Lessons Learned in Liverpool).



Free and safe bike parking & paid and secure bike parking

At the main train station in Liège - designed by renowned architect Santiago Calatrava - three bike parking facilities are available. The main one is a sheltered parking area with room for 180 bikes and it is divided into two parts: one is accessible to registered users only and closed by a gate. Nevertheless, the free part is checked by security twice a day and two video cameras are constantly filming it.

How does it work?

Being a member is mandatory in order to access the secure part of the parking facility. Cyclists must register at the "Maison

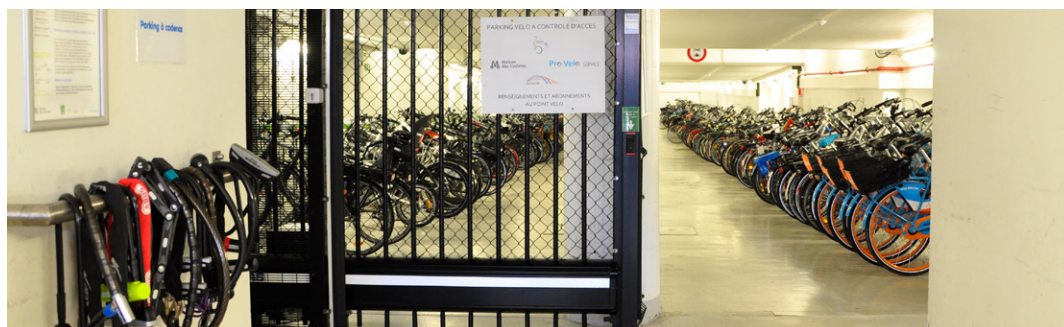
du Vélo" right next to the parking area. They receive a swipe card valid for the duration of their registration.

Fee : 75 euros / 1 year
45 euros / 6 months
25 euros / 3 months.

Members get a specific spot within the parking area for their bikes as well as a locker.

What is the impact?

The 35 spaces are all rented out and many cyclists are on a waiting list. The annual pass is the most common form of membership. The maintenance is the same as in the free parking area (checked by security twice a day). The growing number of expensive bicycles (e-bikes...) - in Belgium is an explanation of the demand for secure parking.



BELGIUM
Liège

Register online to get access to a safe and free of charge bike parking

An alternative to paid parking is a free-of-charge shelter only accessible to registered customers. Indeed, in the United Kingdom (Liverpool) and in Italy (Como), safe and sheltered bike parking is available for free at selected train stations.

How does it work?

In the United Kingdom, with the Go Cycle concept, the train operator Merseyrail offers passengers a safe place to park their bikes before getting on the train. After registering on the website, an activated key-fob is sent by post to the customer's home address. It allows cyclists to access safe shelters (from

one to three shelters along the train network) to park a bike. There is no timeframe - people are registered as long as they wish. In January 2016, 4,700 train passengers had a key-fob to access a secure parking.

At Como Borghi station (Italy), customers must be in possession of a swipe card in order to access the Velostazione. It is the same card that allows them to get a train ticket. It can be ordered on the train operator's website (www.trenord.it) and it is sent by post to the home address. The card is programmed to allow the customer to access two bike parking facilities on the train network.

What is the impact?

Since the opening on 22 September, 2015 to the end of October 2015, 52 people have already subscribed online to get access to the bike parking.

UK & ITALY



BB2 - Offer Convenient Public Bikes

Getting a Customer-Friendly Approach

Creating a new bicycle sharing scheme at train stations is offering a new service to passengers. Therefore, it is crucial to have a customer-friendly approach. In order to get clients, the service must be convenient, easy and cool to use.

1 subscription = 2 bikes

In the three most developed bike-train services, members are allowed to rent two bikes at a time. It's no surprise that this option is available in Belgium and the United Kingdom after the pioneer work done in the Netherlands by the Dutch OV-fiets programme. Indeed, in the Netherlands, this option is highly valued by customers.

With a single subscription, the member can rent two bikes at the same time and from the same station. The price of the second bike is the same as the first. Therefore, you can take a family member, a friend or a colleague with you.

What is the impact?

In the United Kingdom, the option is mostly used during the weekends and during holidays. It's used by couples or people riding in a group.



Being Visible

The best communication a bike operator can get is to make sure customers easily recognize the bikes at the stations and in the streets. For that, the bike should have a specific identity, while still looking like a regular bike (cf. Guidelines).

A regular city-bike recognizable at railway stations and in the streets

Customers using the BiTiBi concept are not tourists visiting a city. They want a regular city-bike that is good quality, looks nice and is efficient.

How does it work?

Bikes must be branded simply and elegantly to ensure that people can spot them easily at the train station. Moreover, if these bikes can be recognised in the streets when they are used, it's free advertising that the bike operator can't refuse.

Compared with some public bikes, all the bicycles developed in the BiTiBi projects have been designed to look like regular city bikes. If they are simple and robust, they offer more options to the cyclists than normal public bikes. For example, the Bike & Go bikes have seven gears and two integral locks. The Bike & Go has both front

and rear luggage carriers.

These bikes are lighter than certain public bikes:

Blue-bike: 17 kg.

OV-fiets: 19,3 kg. (excepted the lock)

Bike & Go: 21 kg.

Citi Bike (NYC): 18 kg.

Vélib' (Paris) / Villo! (Brussels): 22 kg.



BB3 – Unity if Bike-Train Organisations

Creating Interactions Between Bike and Train Operators

When bike and train companies work well together, the implementation of a bike share scheme is easier from the beginning. Indeed, the bike organisation can benefit on the marketing experience - and budget - of the train operator and its massive client database. Throughout the lifetime of the project, adaptations to improve the service are facilitated. Moreover, using the train operator structure is a way to keep the costs low. For instance, the marketing and the main communication of the OV-fiets programme is done by Dutch national railway, NS, and Bike & Go uses the staff of

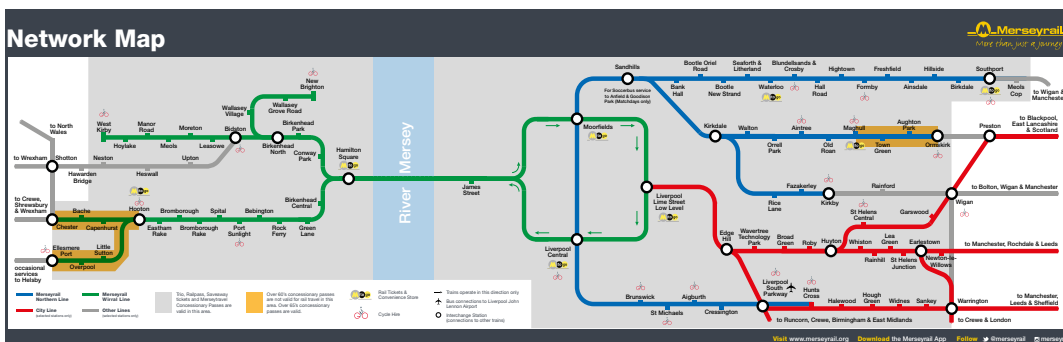
the train stations to hand out the keys for the bikes to the customers

There are also numerous concrete examples which demonstrate the good coordination that is necessary between bike and train operators. The decision on the location of the bike parking and the bike station is an obvious one.

Bicycle logo of Bike & Go on rail network map

Recently, Bike & Go has improved its user-friendly approach by placing its logo on the rail network map on the trains, informing

customers when the service is available at the various stations. Visibility and wayfinding are key elements in the success of the service. Moreover, since the system is not specific to any one city, creating national visibility is crucial in making the service efficient for the customers.



BB4 - Integrate the Payment Systems of Bike and Rail Services

Limiting the Number of Transportation Cards and Combining Marketing Campaigns

The daily life of people - and commuters - is full of registrations and subscriptions and they often end up with a pile of cards and tickets. For a seamless bike-train-bike trip, limiting the number of transportation cards is another key element of the success.

In the United Kingdom, Belgium, and the Netherlands, all operators have opted for a swipe card or a key-fob which allows cyclists to get a bike and register its trip. For the payment, the rental fee is automatically charged at the end of every month.

OV-Fiets and NS's discount campaign

NS and its OV-fiets programme leads the way in Europe when it comes to simplifying the access to all kind of public transport. Moreover, having a public bike scheme integrated in the services of a train operator allows the company to combine discount campaigns and to highlight intermodality.

How does it work?

Since 2012, OV-fiets can be easily rented by using the national public transport chip card, the Dutch "OV-chipkaart".

As a pilot project, the OV-chip card also can be used to access approximately 40 of the 100 guarded bicycle parking facilities at train stations. Therefore, all train passengers can use the same card to, safely park their own bike, which they used to reach the station, and to rent a public bike for the last mile of the trip.

An example

In September and October 2015, NS combined the discount on off-peak hours & weekend cards for trains with the OV-fiets membership.



Dal Voordeel + OV-fiets

40% discount during off-peak hours and at weekends plus a subscription to OV-fiets

Special

The 1st year
€ 35 instead of €60

[Add to cart](#)

Getting a Bike the First Day I Want It

At the moment, the most used process to register for the BiTiBi service is to subscribe online - or at a bike point in Belgium - and to pay the annual fee, after which a card is sent to the customer by post.

In the Netherlands, since train and bike cards are combined in the “OV chip card”, people can rent a bike on the same day as they subscribe.

The experience has demonstrated that customers prefer getting a bike on the same day as they register. Therefore, operators are developing a new system to offer this option.

On-the-spot registration

Bike & Go has improved its customer-friendly approach by creating an “on-the-spot” registration tool.

How does it work?

Customers can sign up on their phone or tablet device which will provide them their membership number. Normally, they would receive their membership within five working days, but with the number handy, they can hire a bike straight away. Staff just need to check the welcome e-mail and see some valid ID. This feature is only available for two weeks after the customer signs up. After that, using the membership card is necessary.



BB5 - Communicate Positively. Promote Cycling. Develop an Attractive Marketing Strategy

Promoting Cycling

There is no development of bicycle services without cyclists. Therefore, promoting cycling should be a part of the communication actions from the very beginning of the service.

Try a Bike & Ride to the Station

In Catalonia, the 2015 European Mobility Week provided the opportunity to promote cycling. Actions were organised to encourage people working in companies located less than 5 kilometres from the train stations to try a bike. Offering a bike experience is the best way to convince people that biking to work is doable.

the bike operator, who contacted several companies. A group of employees from a pharmaceutical company tried e-bikes, riding from their office to the station - a distance of 2.8 km. The goal was to help them realise that cycling to work from the train station to the office is a pleasant way to finish their daily commute. New cyclists were amazed how fast they reached the train station. In order to turn the ride into a friendly event, breakfast was served when cyclists arrived at the station and a photo shoot, using the BiTiBi logo, was organised.

An example

In Sant Cugat, the “Try a Bike & Ride to the Station” event has been organised by



Training to repair a bike

In the Milano area, the launch of a new bike rental scheme and the opening of a new bike parking facility were an opportunity to promote cycling in general.

An example

In association with the Italian Federation of Friends of the Bicycle (FIAB), bike repair training was organised and advice about commuting by bike was given out.



Making the bikes visible in station halls

Making bicycles visible is simply the best way to promote cycling and intermodality.

An example

In the station Haymarket in Scotland, Bike & Go bikes are parked in the hall, instead of a secure shelter by the building. Therefore, there is no chance of missing them, all people walking in and out of the station pass the bikes. More than making the service -very- visible, people can stop to look at the bikes. They become part of the landscape and people's daily commute. As a result, this station has become the best performing location of the Bike & Go network.



Being Pro-Active Toward Major Companies - B2B Marketing

A Business-to-Business (B2B) marketing strategy is an important way to get members. Indeed, meeting with major companies located around the train station, promoting cycling to them and creating good relations

with these potential customers can be a successful strategy to get new members. This strategy can be developed into very concrete actions..

Welcome package for companies

Useful merchandising contributes to the visibility of the brand. In Catalonia and the United Kingdom, a Welcome Package is offered to companies signing a contract with the bike/train operator.

Examples

In the United Kingdom, in addition to the Welcome Pack that includes Bike & Go cards, the administrative documents and posters to advertise the service to employees and promotional items are also given. These include bike related items (branded puncture repair kit or high visibility snap bands), useful office items like pens or things that can be used in daily life, like shopping cart coins.

In Catalonia, companies receive a project folder containing documents explaining the specifics of the service to the employees: a powerpoint presentation describing 'how to implement BiTiBi step by step' and flyers and posters. It also contains a branded mug for all BiTiBi users.

Discount for major companies

An example

In order to attract companies subscribing to Bike & Go for their employees, Merseyrail has been in contact with several of them and offered discounts depending on the contract size. The train/bike company participated in the largest European Employee Benefits conference in London in order to make the company known to HR Departments. Bike & Go has recently signed a contract with a company which bought 47 subscriptions.

What is the impact?

The minimum goal is to share the information with companies situated around a train station in order to increase the visibility of the service. Within a company, people using the shared bike and convinced by it are the best ambassadors to get new members.

Creating a Community of Users

Branding the service from the very beginning is essential. Then using the brand to create a community of users will serve the image of the company and facilitate getting new members. Clients are the best ambassadors.

Bike & Go and the social events at train stations

A company should not miss out on an opportunity to increase the visibility of its brand and the service in order to get new members, and to get free publicity in the news. These events are an opportunity to share the values of the brand as much as the practical information about how the service works. In this context, Bike & Go celebrated its two-year anniversary with the train passengers and the bike users at train stations.

An example

In August 2015, commuters were invited into a pop-up haven of 'urban calm' as part of Bike & Go's two-year anniversary celebrations. Liverpool Street Station in London played host to the chill-out zone, with free massages, smoothies and birthday cakes on offer.

The celebrations continued in Manchester and Liverpool, with Bike & Go-themed cupcakes available at Merseyrail's Liverpool South Parkway station and sweet treats,

balloons and presents also handed out at Northern Rail's Manchester Oxford Road.

And Bike & Go has offered anyone who also celebrated their birthday on August 13 – the scheme's official birthday – a year's free subscription.

What is the impact?

Thanks to this event, the company is building its brand and improving its visibility. Moreover, articles in the local press were published, relating the development of service through the whole country.



Blue-bike and the social media

For the easily recognizable Blue-bike, the company has developed a visual identity and uses photos to deliver its message: getting on a bike after the train is easy, useful, efficient and pleasant.

In order to communicate with the clients and to make the brand a part of their life, Blue-bike uses several social media channels like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

An example

Clients regularly post pictures of their bike experience and share the overall message

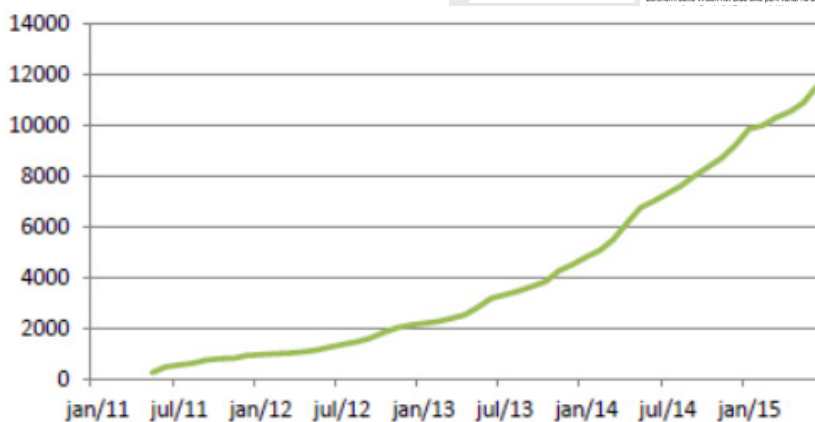
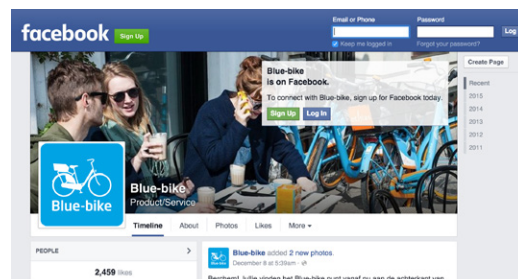
for free. Blue-bike has activated the process by being active itself on several social media channels and by organising several photo contests.

Blue-bike also organised a successful advertising campaign on Facebook in 2015 aimed at reaching targeted potential customers. The campaign was furthermore very cost-effective.

What is the impact?

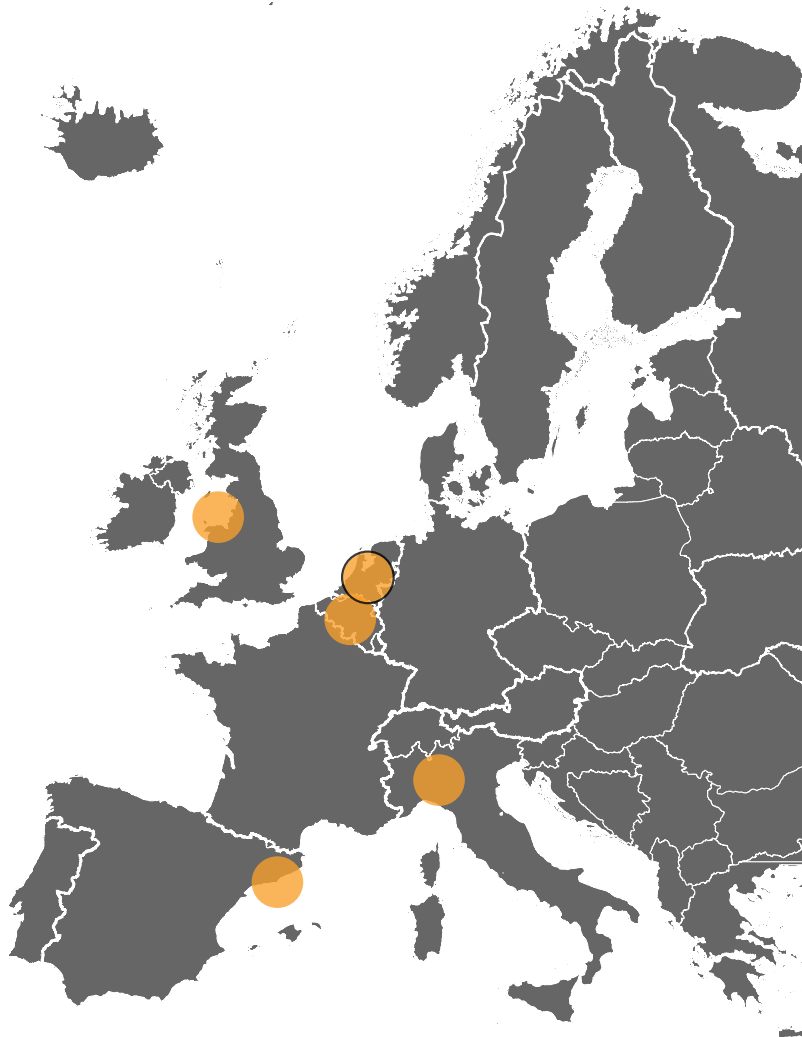
The important increase of Blue-bike subscribers is the result of an entire company strategy, but we notice that since the company has modernised its communication, the impact on the visibility of the service has been boosted.

BELGIUM



Blue-bike's registrations after the modernisation of communication

BITIBI



BiTiBi.eu

You can follow the BiTiBi project – the pilots in Belgium, the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain and the development of the Dutch model – on the BiTiBi.eu website. Get inspired by the local pilot projects and how they provide a seamless door-to-door transport connection by combining bikes and trains.

