

A comprehensive approach to mobility management for home-school trips (Reggio Emilia, Italy)

A Mobility Manager present in 72 per cent of the schools

The comprehensive approach of the city of Reggio Emilia to home-school trips is influencing the mobility behaviour of 72 per cent of its schools.

City: Reggio Emilia

Country: Italy

Implementation body: City administration in collaboration with the different stakeholders

Level of implementation: city level

Topic: Home-school mobility management

Target group(s):

- Students
- Teachers
- Parents
- Citizens in general

Stakeholders involved:

- City administration
- City boroughs
- Provincial School Office
- Heads of schools
- Reggio Emilia Mobility Agency
- Italian Federation of Paediatricians
- Arpa – regional agency for environmental protection
- Ausl - local health authority
- Road Safety Observatory
- Cycling association “Tuttinbici-Fiab”
- Students
- Parents



INTRODUCTION

When it comes to home-school mobility management the Municipality of Reggio Emilia has followed a comprehensive approach that involves a variety of stakeholders, clear objectives and allows for the co-creation of action plans and projects. More specifically, in 2009 the Municipality launched the “Manifesto for safe, sustainable and autonomous mobility for home-school journeys”. Since the signing of the “Manifesto” a number of projects have been carried out with the aim to promote home-school trips which are more autonomous, sustainable and safe (Pellegrini, 2018).

OBJECTIVES

Ensure that going to school without the car and with friends becomes a consolidated habit and an opportunity to improve:

- Health
- Safety
- Environment
- Autonomy
- Social interaction
- Schools and the local area.

SPECIFIC TARGETS:

- Reduce road accidents and traffic near schools
- Double the number of children going to school with sustainable modes of transport
- Ensure each school has a mobility manager.

MEASURES IMPLEMENTED

The measures implemented fall under six lines of action (Pellegrini, 2018):

1. Education:

- Promote better and healthier lifestyles and raise awareness on environmental issues
- Raise awareness and educate children on sustainable mobility.

2. Communication: ensure that drivers and road users respect road traffic rules

3. Promotion:

- Provide the opportunity for students to experience sustainable modes of transport during the home-work trip;
- Incentivize the participation at sustainable mobility projects.

4. Safety: ensure more safety on main home-school routes and around schools

5. Services:

- Provide and promote collective modes of transport, e.g. school bus, carpooling
- Promote non-motorized modes of transport, e.g. walking and cycling

6. Planning:

- Sustainable mobility should be at the centre of planning - develop a safe network for vulnerable users
- Consider mobility issues when designing new schools.

The city of Reggio Emilia has implemented a number of projects within the framework of its Manifesto, the most important ones include:

- **School Mobility Manager (SMM):** the school representative regarding mobility who can:
 - Act as a spokesman for the school's mobility issues and demands
 - Receive and propose initiatives regarding sustainable mobility education
 - Encourage safe and sustainable modes of transport
 - Provide a continuous communication channel between the school and the Municipality.
- **BiciBus** (bicycle bus) and **PediBus** (walking bus): groups of children travelling to school by bike and on foot respectively, accompanied by volunteers (parents, teachers, etc.) along pre-established routes.
- **Mobility experiences for day nurseries and nursery schools:** provide nursery schools with balance bikes in order to give the opportunity to children between two and six years old to learn how to balance on a bicycle. As a result, Primary School children are able to ride a bicycle.

- **Shared use of public spaces:** a series of initiatives aimed at promoting the use of spaces near schools in a shared and safe way. Three main lines of action:
 - Traffic calming and infrastructural improvement of the areas surrounding the schools
 - Temporary car free zones at the beginning and end of the lessons
 - Clearly marking the presence of schools outside the school grounds and on the roads that serve the schools. This is achieved by the co-creation of “Urban Tattoos”, that is designing and painting with the children relevant designs on the streets.
- **Collaboration with paediatricians:** local paediatricians participate at public events and school meetings and have direct contact with individual parents in order to raise awareness of the importance of daily activity for the healthy growth and development of children.

RESULTS

The following data refer to the school year 2017-2018 and represent some of the results achieved so far:¹¹

- 72 per cent of the schools have a Mobility Manager
- 12 per cent of schools have a bicycle and/or walking bus programmes
- Shared use of public spaces: 5 “school streets” have been established that cover 17 per cent of the city’s student population.

In 2014 and 2019, 99 balance bikes were distributed to a total of 34 nursery schools and kindergartens.

SUCCESS FACTORS

- The adoption of a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach regarding home-school mobility and its incorporation in the city’s framework of Mobility Governance.
- Sharing of lines of actions and projects with relevant stakeholders.
- Possibility to have access to national funding thanks to this interdisciplinary approach and collaboration with stakeholders.
- Flexibility in implementation: since 2009 a variety of mobility management initiatives have been implemented, some of them covering multiple years, others were stopped and new ones adopted.
- When possible, testing mobility initiatives initially in order to allow for changes and for understanding their real impact.

BARRIERS AND OBSTACLES

- The limited human resources available within the Municipality for the implementation of the Manifesto.

¹¹ Source: Degl’Incerti Tocci (2019). Re: Manifesto – Informazioni aggiuntive [email to I.Lepinioti], 15 May 2019.