

Cycling Mobility In Rural Areas

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The concept of sustainable development, which combines a tri-dimensional approach (economic, social and environment), opened-up new perspectives in the way present problems are looked up-on. Sustainable Mobility and Sustainable Mobility Plans are additional and more recent concepts and means which emerge mainly due to the recognized increasing need to overcome the restrictions of traditional approaches to mobility problems and move towards planning in a non-sectoral (integrated) and long-term (sustainable) way of designing healthier and more sustainable communities. This paper is about the relevance of applying the idea of sustainable mobility as a challenge for local development, for the promotion of natural resources, for the support of local culture and identity and for the promotion of environmental friendly transports (namely bicycle). The paper presents the policy development process and implementation of a sustainable mobility plan which the authors are designing, with the support of the Portuguese Environment Agency, for a small municipally located in the Centro Region of Portugal (Murtosa), providing some grounds for optimism about the role of spatial planning in delivering sustainable mobility. During the process we have involved the community (in general) and key actors (in particular) creating a network involving the Secondary Schools and the National Association of Bicycle Manufacturers (to promote future cycling users), BIORIA (a successful project on ecotourism) and the Biology Department of the University of Aveiro (to develop ecotourism activities) and finally the INOVARIA (a cluster telecom agency which will promote ICT in cycling activities). In addition to local and regional networks we are developing efforts to include the idea in international networks.

Keywords: mobility, cycling, sustainable development, spatial planning