



GUIDELINES FOR THE ACTIVE TRAVEL AUDIT IN WEIZ

AN URBACT II PROJECT



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Active Travel Audit

The Active Travel Audit is a self assessment method carried out by different groups. It's not meant for benchmarking but for evolutionary quality, improvement of the active travel system in the concerned city. To carry out the audit it needs an external auditor with communication skills and expertise in cycling and walking and the internal evaluation group consisting of politicians, administrations and user.

Guideline for Active Travel Audit

Active Travel Audit consists of following steps:

- Action and organisational planning for Active Travel Audit
- Collection of background information
- Carry out the assessment procedure and the consensus meeting with the group
- On-site visit with problem documentation (text & photo)
- First findings / potential options for activities (strengths / weaknesses / opportunities / threats)
- In a second meeting with the group discussion of action plan
- Draft of an action plan for Active Travel Activities
- Optional: further meetings for fine tuning

Action planning for Active Travel Audit

- Appointment of responsible person within the municipality for the organisation of the Audit
- Development of time schedule, venue
- Appointment of Auditor (person who moderates and documents the process)
- Definition of the composition of the group
 - Politics (must: traffic, optional: environment, city planning, health)
 - Administration (must: traffic – planning, infrastructure, maintenance, optional: environment, urban planning, health)
 - To address user of walking or cycling initiatives or using of municipal newspapers to activate people to participate. Covering different target groups (young people / old people families with children)
 - If need be, other relevant target groups may also be included (city marketing, tourism, women's representatives, child organisations)
- The mayor needs to be informed. Particularly in smaller towns the participation of the mayor is beneficial
- Dispatching of invitations / reminding by phone
- Organisation of beverages / snacks

Collection of background information

The auditor collects background information like:

- Resolutions of the city government that effect active mobility
- Concepts (like traffic concepts, environmental & energy concepts, concepts relating to health preventions etc.)
- Facts & Figures :
 - budget development concerning the topic
 - traffic census or survey
 - safety data
- Responsibilities: how is Active travel anchored in the municipality? Who is responsible? Where are links to other departments? (possibly in form of diagrams)
- Important external frame conditions
 - National specifications
 - Regional/provincial specifications
 - Cooperation with neighbouring municipalities
- Interrelation with history/everyday culture
 - How has the topic developed over time?
 - Were there any conflicts relating to the topic in the past or implementations of best practice solutions?

For the auditor interviews are the best way to receive background information (e.g. with director of traffic planning and optional with other chief officers from departments, and written information.

Procedure of Audit

Organisational issues:

- A moderator and a keeper of the minutes need to be present at the audit. The audit takes about 3 hours, questionnaires are distributed among the participants
- The auditor and/or organiser gives a short overview of the entire process
- Every participant answers every question (should he not have any knowledge regarding this issue he should provide an intuitive estimation)
- The Auditor asks the question and the participants tick one of the quality levels between 0-4, the provided text supports the participants in finding the correct assessment. However, this is not the major basis for valuation.
- The auditor can also present one to three good examples (or bad examples that should not be imitated)
- After everyone has completed all quality levels and all options for action the auditor asks for the results. Ideally the groups sit together. In case that there are big differences between the individual evaluations the auditor asks for the reason of the differing evaluation – and tries to reach a consensus with regard to the quality levels
- It is important to document suggestions for possible improvements for pedestrian and bicycle traffic arising during the discussion. Should no such suggestions be provided the moderator/auditor tries to help the discussion along.

- The auditor should be flexible, but too long discussions should be avoided (about 8 minutes per question should be sufficient)

According to experience the discussion becomes easier and livelier at the end of the audit

On-site visits

On site visits (on bike) of important parts of the network are carried out together with representatives of the administration and if possible also with users. Important problem areas are explained and good solutions presented.

The on-site visit should take 2-3 hours and should be carried out with a smaller group than the audit itself.

It is important that bikes are available for all participants. Also, a camera and clip board are necessary.

Analysis/Evaluation of the Audit

The evaluations are recorded and the questionnaires collected.

The evaluation shows the areas with a low quality level. The inputs to the discussion point out a first course of action.

The auditor includes all results in a power point presentation that will be presented at the second meeting.

In addition, facts of the pre-analysis and the on-site visits are integrated into the presentation. Very important is the documentation of the discussion concerning the possibilities to improve the quality of active travel in the concerned city.

Second meeting

Based on the results and inputs of the first audit meeting measures for the quality improvements are discussed. Step by step, responsibilities, costs and budget for the implementations are described and defined.

Should discussions concerning certain points be very substantial a third meeting can be arranged.

From Audit Report to Action Plan

The auditor creates an action plan that might be fine-tuned and broadened through talks and discussions with the responsible persons, if required.

The active travel audit method is using the experiences of the BYPAD (Bicycle Policy Audit) method that was developed in a series of EU projects and in more than 150 cities successful implemented.