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COPENHAGENIZE CONSULTING

Press Release

19 September 2011

For Immediate Release

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PRESS RELEASE
COPENHAGEN, DENMARK
19 SEPTEMBER 2011
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The first comprehensive index for measuring bicycle-friendly cities has been launched and the “Top 20 Most Bicycle-Friendly Cities” list is now published.

<http://copenhagenize.eu/index>

The renaissance of the bicycle continues unabated around the world as cities once again realise the value of having high levels of human-powered traffic. Just as it did in the late 1800s, the bicycle is transforming both society and the urban landscape for the better.

Copenhagenize Consulting - www.copenhagenize.eu - is an urban planning consultancy specialising in re-establishing the bicycle as transport in cities and towns. We consider the bicycle to be the most effective tool in our urban toolbox for rebuilding our liveable cities for the new century.

Early in 2011, a discussion arose at Copenhagenize Consulting about which cities really are the best for urban cycling. Over a period of several months, our team gathered information and statistics. With this research we were able to develop a comprehensive index which we used to rate cities for bicycle friendliness. It was originally intended as a tool for the company’s internal use, but we later recognised that the index was perhaps worth releasing to the public.

At the end of the day, over 80 major cities around the world were rated. Ideally, we would have also included smaller cities, but we decided to narrow it down to major cities. Smaller cities like Groningen, Netherlands or Malmö, Sweden would have fared extremely well, but the line had to be drawn somewhere.

The smallest city to make the Top 20 list is Portland. We are aware that it doesn’t technically fit into the major cities category, but we were curious to see how the USA’s top cycling city would fare. Not to mention we would never hear the end of it from Portlanders if they weren’t included.

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The final list of the “Top 20 Bicycle-Friendly Cities” offers some surprises. We thought we had a pretty clear idea of what the list would look like, but a number of cities ended up shining brighter, especially after bonus points were awarded.

The top two cities, Amsterdam and Copenhagen, will probably surprise no one, but we were surprised to see cities like Montreal, Guadalajara, Rio de Janeiro, New York City and Dublin rank so well.

The Top 20 Most Bicycle-Friendly Cities Index for 2011

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| 1. Amsterdam | 11. Portland |
| 2. Copenhagen | 12. Guadalajara |
| 3. Barcelona | 13. Hamburg |
| 4. Tokyo | 14. Stockholm |
| 5. Berlin | 15. Helsinki |
| 6. Munich | 15. London |
| 7. Paris | 17. San Francisco |
| 8. Montréal | 18. Rio de Janeiro |
| 9. Dublin | 18. Vienna |
| 10. Budapest | 20. New York City |

The Copenhagenize Index gives cities marks for their efforts (or lack of) toward re-establishing the bicycle as a feasible, accepted and practical form of transport.

Cities were given between 0 and 4 points in 13 different index categories. There was a potential for 12 bonus points awarded for particularly impressive efforts or results. In short, a maximum of 64 points could be awarded.

No city scored full marks, but Amsterdam came close with 54 out of 64. If we look solely at the bonus points, however, Dublin rode off with 12 out of 12, Paris and Barcelona scored 11, and Tokyo, Copenhagen and Amsterdam each harvested 10.

In the event of a draw, the city with the highest bonus point score is ranked higher. This determined the hierarchy among the cities of Budapest, Portland, Guadalajara and Hamburg while Helsinki and London were even on all scores, as were Rio de Janeiro and Vienna.



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The 13 Categories

Advocacy: How is the city's (or region/country) advocacy NGO regarded and what level of influence does it have?

Bicycle Culture: Has the bicycle re-established itself as transport among regular citizens or only within sub-cultures?

Bicycle Facilities: Are there readily accessible bike racks and ramps on stairs? Is there space allocated on public transit and is wayfinding well designed?

Bicycle Infrastructure: How well does the city's infrastructure encourage bicycle transit?

Bike Share Programme: Does the city have a comprehensive and well used bike sharing programme?

Gender Split: What percentage of the city's cyclists is male and female?

Modal Share for Bicycles: What percentage of modal share is made up of cyclists?

Modal Share Increase Since 2006: How has the number of trips by bicycle changed over the past five years?

Perception of Safety: Is the perception of safety for urban cyclists, reflected in helmet-wearing rates, high; or are they riding scared?

Politics: What is the political climate regarding urban cycling?

Social Acceptance: How do drivers and the community at large regard urban cyclists?

Urban Planning: How much emphasis is placed on bicycle infrastructure by city planners, and how well informed are they about international best practice?

Traffic Calming: What efforts have been made to lower speed limits and generally calm traffic in order to provide greater safety to pedestrians and cyclists?

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Developing the index has been time consuming but rewarding. We would like to thank all of the people in our network who assisted with information and statistics. A wide range of individuals - politicians, advocates, traffic planners - have contributed to this inaugural index and we couldn't have done it without their help.

The full Copenhagenize Index is online at:

<http://copenhagenize.eu/index>

Queries from the press can be directed at:

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Best regards,

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Building Better Bicycle Cultures

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