Action 358
Pedestrians’ Quality Needs

Objectives:

- Improve the understanding of how the public space, the transport system and the social, legal and political context interrelate with pedestrians’ quality needs.
- Advance the effectiveness and efficiency of future policy and research by developing a new and coherent system of concepts, theories and models which influence the quality and provision of pedestrian facilities.
- Enable relevant organisations to work together to identify, prioritise, tackle and prevent current and future restrictions on the full potential for pedestrians by providing an accessible knowledge base and easy to use auditing tools.
- Stimulate partners to innovate tools and disseminate knowledge that help to shed new light on the issue and stimulate a new enthusiasm to provide for safe and agreeable mobility.
- Provide recommendations for further research.

Introduction

People need to walk. The quality of their experience however can vary greatly and this in turn is known to directly impact on their decisions to choose to walk against other modes and the frequency, length, scope and enjoyment of their trips.

The Pedestrians’ Quality Needs Project (PNQ) has been established to identify what people need for their safe and agreeable mobility in public space and to show the added value of a systems approach compared with sectoral approaches. The main objective is to provide knowledge of pedestrians’ quality needs and how those needs relate to structural and functional interventions, policy making and regulation to support walking conditions across the EU and other involved countries.

Working Groups

PNQ is a multi-disciplinary study, exploring the needs of pedestrians and developing models in context, based on evidence, and with measurable outputs. The project started with the compilation of Country Reports, showing available statistics, national and international research and development publications with regard to pedestrians and documented policy statements of stakeholders on the various political and institutional levels.

The action has 4 working groups that together aim to cover all aspects of the issue that are relevant for policy making:
- WG 1 Functional Needs (what can be observed – the facts)
- WG 2 Perceived Needs (emotional perspective – decisions determinants)
- WG 3 Durability & Future Prospects (the dynamic perspective – robustness aspects)
- WG 4 Integration and Coherence (from gathered information to policy process).

Challenges

- to make the hidden issues visible and find ways to advance policy making. The WG’s constructed a clear picture of the complex issues; a quality driven approach is found more promising than a traditional problem-oriented approach.
- to translate an abstract theoretical conceptual framework into an appealing approach
- to find ways to achieve results without substantive budgets
- to bridge different backgrounds from the many involved disciplines
- to keep the (tight) work schedule.

Main Achievements:

- Website www.walkeurope.org provides actual information for the general public and reference to the many internal products (drafts and accounts) for the participants
- Country Reports for 18 out of the 20 participating countries are available
- The outline for the Final Report is agreed. It will be a 3 part publication. Part 1 will cover the backgrounds and the conceptual framework; Part 2 will cover the Working Group research findings; Part 3 will present guidance for stakeholders on the national and local levels. Part 1 is almost ready; Almost all sections of the chapters of Part 2 are available in draft. Part 3 can be written when Part 2 is complete.
- A Final Conference will be held in The Hague (NL) in November 2010. It will be a joint conference: WALK21, ICTCT, OECD-PUSH and will be hosted by the NL Ministry of Transport and The Hague Municipality.