



WELCOME!

The Bicycle Helmet Discussion:

How Can We Keep It Constructive?

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Agenda

3:45: Introductory considerations

4:15: Breakout discussions

4:35: Breakout reports

4:50: Full group discussion

5:10: Your final thoughts

5:15: End of workshop

Why this is important to ECF

- European Cyclists' Federation (ECF) Helmet Working Group started in 2004 to:
 - Prevent helmet laws taking the place of safer streets
 - Show that helmet promotions can undermine programs to increase bicycling
 - Keep helmet wearing an individual choice



What is happening now?

- ECF's Helmet Program is helping to move the discussion from reactive to realistic.
- ECF member organizations are helping each other fight helmet laws and bad promotions.
- Partners around the world are participating.
- Results from Velo-city 2012 helmet symposium and today's workshop are helping formulate next steps for the program and future Velo-cities.

Prepare for Breakout

You will break into small discussion groups in just a few minutes. While our speakers are presenting **consider:**

- Their ideas
- Your experience
- Portrayal of cycling
- Portrayal of bicycle helmets through media, insurance forms, events, person-to-person, etc.
- Practical conclusions from scientific studies
- Overall impacts on society and public health

COST Action TU1101

- COST: European **CO**operation in **S**cience and **T**echnology
 - Funded by the European Science Foundation
 - Transport and Urban Development (TUD) is one domain
- Towards safer bicycling through optimization of helmet function and usage
- Increase scientific knowledge on bicycle helmet (i) head protection and (ii) accident prevention
- Establish international research consortiums and funding
- Disseminate old and new knowledge allowing cyclists to maximally benefit from scientific knowledge
- Run time: Oct. 2011 – Oct. 2015



de Jong (2012)

Helmet law/promotion only has a net health benefit IF:

Injuries that could be prevented by cyclists wearing helmets

Health costs of lost cycling due to helmet laws/promotions

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% reduction of head injuries from wearing helmets

% reduction of injuries of total injury costs of bare-headed

% reduction in cycling following law/promotion

Ratio of health benefit to health cost of unhelmeted cycling

Literature: 0.3-0.85 (de Jong: 0.67)

Literature: 0.45 (de Jong: 0.75 "extreme")

Literature: 0.2-0.4 (de Jong: 0.1-0.2 "relatively modest")

Literature: 11-77 (de Jong: 1.3-30.2 "pessimistic")

de Jong: $0.67 \times 0.75 = 0.5$
"an optimistic estimate of the helmet preventable fraction of injury costs"

de Jong: $0.1 \text{ to } 0.2 \times 1.3 \text{ to } 30.2 = 0.13$
to 6 "net health benefit difficult to achieve except in extreme circumstances"

de Jong (2012) - conclusions

- Considerations:
 - Do helmets reduce head injury, but increase likelihood of other injuries?
 - Does the enforced wearing of helmets lead to cyclists taking greater risks?
 - Do helmet laws/promotion really reduce cycling, or just reduce growth in cycling? Can they ever *increase* cycling?
 - Do those reducing their cycling substitute for other activities? (Running, gym etc)
- de Jong: “A (positive) net health benefit emerges only in **dangerous bicycling environments** under **optimistic assumption** as to the efficacy of helmets and a **minor behavioural response**” http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1368064

Helmets – the dark side...

- Some myths and facts:
 - Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) leading cause of hospitalization for injured cyclists
 - Main cause of TBI? Vehicle collisions and fall without external causes.
 - Official statistics show only half the truth: 2/3 of all accidents (also severe ones) not reported in Germany (dark field)



Helmets – the dark side...

- Things to think about:
 - Can helmets prevent TBI?
 - Costs for society caused by TBI?
 - Risk factors for TBI and methods of prevention?

Use your brain and find the best way to protect it!

Spain: What happened?

- Before 2004:
 - Cycle helmet not mandatory at any roads.
- From 2004 to 2012
 - Cycle helmets mandatory at inter-urban roads (2004).
 - No empirical evidence of any protective effect of this law (*we will show this in the roundtable*).
 - At the end of 2012, the Government announced the extension of compulsory helmet law also inside cities because “*the risk for cyclists is the same*” (?!!).
- After 2012
 - Ideological rather than scientific debate.

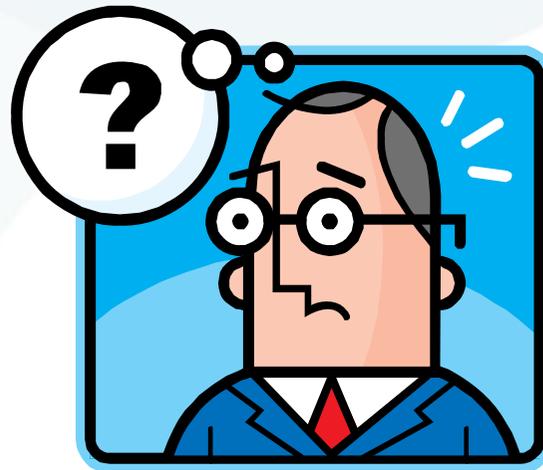
Spain: The debate

- Against compulsory helmet:
 - Cyclists associations.
 - Main municipalities of Spain (mainly if they have bike-promotion policies): Barcelona, Madrid, Sevilla, Zaragoza, San Sebastian, Vitoria ... up to > 25 = 11 Million people.
 - Pedestrians, environmentalists and consumer associations.
- In favour of compulsory helmet:
 - Road victims associations.
 - Car drivers associations.
 - Insurance companies (through its foundations).

Next is breakout, how it will help:

- Prepare your thoughts after hearing our speakers and include your own experience.
- We will capture your ideas twice:
 1. Your priorities and concerns from breakout
 2. Your final thoughts
- ECF's Helmet Working Group will use the results to prioritize next activities.
- You can use the results yourself and bring them back to your own community for discussion.

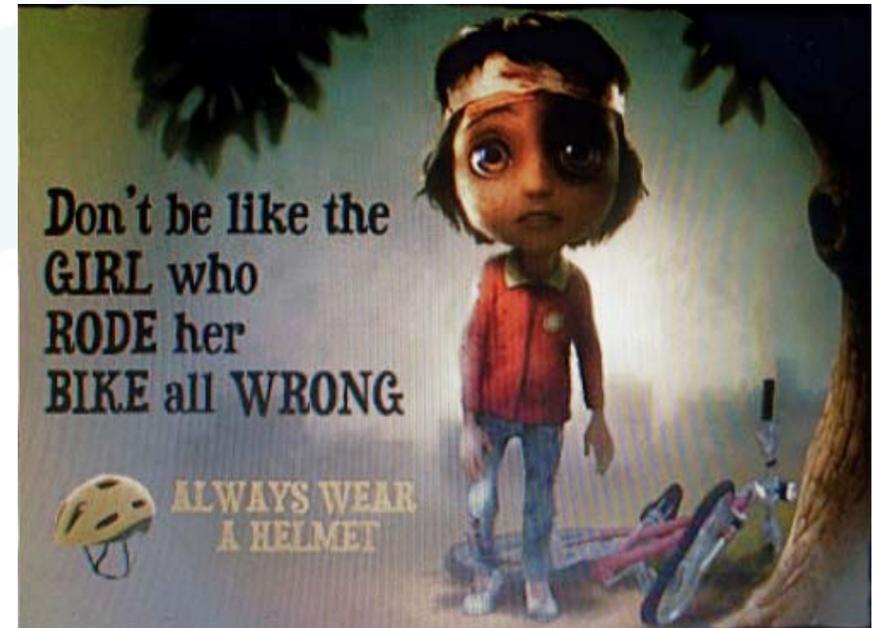
Any questions before we get started?



Breakout Question – *What are the actual results of helmet promotions?*

Consider:

- Your thoughts after speakers
- Your experience
- Portrayal of cycling
- Portrayal of bicycle helmets
- Practical conclusions from scientific studies
- Overall impacts on society and public health



➤ Record your group's top three points.

Breakout Reports

- Report your three priorities from your group discussion.



Full Group Discussion

- How can we keep bicycle helmet discussions constructive?
- How can we stop accusations that make cyclists feel bad?
- What did you learn about this during your breakout session?



Your Final Thoughts

- What else should we include in the results from this workshop?



Next Steps for You

- **Would you like to learn more?**
 - Visit the ECF booth here before you leave.
 - Visit ECF's Helmet page www.ecf.com/3500_1
- **Are you not quite sure how to approach this?**
 - Consider discussing these concerns with your colleagues.
- **Would you like to get involved?**
 - Talk with Ceri Woolsgrove here, at the ECF booth or email him at c.woolsgrove@ecf.com

Opportunities at Velo-city

- ECF Booth
 - stop by to discuss more about helmets
 - pick up materials to bring home
- Wednesday lunch discussion
 - look for sign “Helmet Discussion”
- Wednesday afternoon roundtables
 - including the situation in Spain
- Thursday morning podium discussion
 - How Safe is Cycling?



Thank you for your participation!

For more information
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