

Being Young in the City

Lifestyle, Implications on Mobility Needs and Traffic Safety

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City – Definitions

- A large settlement, bigger than a town.
- Shelter
 - In Europe: right to build a city wall, a belfort, etc.,
 - centre of a bishop's diocese, had a cathedral
 - esp. in former times: protection against enemies
- Economy
 - facilitates interaction between people and firms
 - central place → special goods & services

City – Implications

- Field of creativity
 - e.g. new movements:
 - in the arts (1880s Paris)
 - in technology (Silicon Valley)
 - multilingual and multi-ethnic community
 - site of practical citizenship & cultural innovation:
public spaces, festivals

(Hall P. 1998)

Youth – Definitions

Webster's New World Dictionary:

- "The time of life when one is young; especially:
 - period between childhood and maturity
 - early period of existence, growth, or development."

but also:

- state of being young or immature or inexperienced
- freshness & vitality characteristic of young persons
- period of psychosexual development; adolescence
- period from about 12 to less than 25/26

Characteristics of 15/16 year old boys and girls

Chaloupka et al, 1995

- have to master a kind of balance between
 - already well known and experienced situations (e.g., family)
 - the handling of new ones (relationships and activities outside the family)

15/16 year old boys and girls

Chaloupka et al, 1995

- growing awareness of own physical strength
- changes in hormonal status which leads to:
 - high interest in experimentation with the own body as well as with the environment
 - strong interest in all kinds of things and substances that provide sensation and that “widen the mind”
- → distance from norms & habits of parents
- peer group orientation

Peer-group

- During adolescence peer-group replaces parents
- **Parents:** mediate basic norms (still important)
- **Peers:** behaviour patterns → daily practice
- Each group → special rules

Consider Subcultures

- **Signals of membership by symbols:** norms, clothing, hairstyles, footwear, interests, slang, gathering places, music
- Response to dominant system: In-group or „tribal“ mentality
- Social interactions → **emotional** (= „urban tribes“, Michel Maffesoli 1985 - french sociologist)



OECD: ~ 60 subcultures, lots of further subgroups

Mobility in subcultures

- **Vehicles:** cars, motorcycles, scooters, skateboards, surf boards; examples:

mods: scooters



rockers: motorcycles



Why of importance for traffic safety?

Hierarchical model of driver behaviour (Keskinen, 1996)

Goals for life and skills for living

- Importance of cars and driving for personal development
- Skills for self-control

Goals and context of driving

- Purpose, environment, social context, company

Mastering traffic situations

- Adapting to the demands of the present situation


Vehicle manoeuvring

- Controlling speed, direction and position

Tasks of development

- Being appreciated by friends
- Searching for relationships
- Dissociation from parents
- Longing for autonomy, independency
- Question about occupational future

Factors influencing mobility

- Changes in life:
 - Removal / changing home
 - new relationships
 - new job
- All of these are more probable when being young  mobility

Function of the car

- Adds a „grown-up status“
 - Helps to solve tasks of development
(e.g. independency, appreciation by friends etc.)
- but:
- Maladjustment in traffic – e.g. if traffic becomes the „playground“ for the tasks of development
(Keskinen)

Study 1 Vienna
Duty and Fun
15/16 y. Chaloupka et al. 1995

- Duty **and** fun for youth no contradictions → engagement in environmental projects
- → do things which are useful **as well as** amusing
- → apply own ideas (be an individual) **and** feel sense of community (participation)
- → to experience success
- → to be taken seriously

Study 2 Vienna:
Importance of Car/Driving Licence

16-25 y. old Viennese, , KfV et al. 2007

- Being independent from parents and public transport
- feeling **of freedom**
- **status symbol** (esp. youngsters with migration background)

Pros:

- cosiness
- Comfort
- independency

Cons:

- short headways by others
- ruthless cardrivers
- speeding cardrivers
- animals on the road
- financial costs

preferred to public means esp. by young in rural environment

Public Means

Pros

- In Vienna very good infrastructure

Cons

- (imagined) dependency
- insufficient connections to rural area
- criminal potential in some passengers
- lacking cleanliness

Study 3 Vienna:

Mobility needs:

qualitative interview of 16-24 y. old youngsters in Vienna, n=36, FACTUM 2008

50% m 50% f;

75% working;

50% driving a car; 75% walking daily

Spontaneous definition of mobility:

- To reach each location at any time, flexibility (67%)
- Public means, car, bicycle, own feet (33%)

Feeling safe in city traffic

- **Feeling in traffic in general**
 - Very safe/safe 80%
- **Highest feeling of safety as:**
- Car driver 67%: car can be closed, I drive myself, crush zone
- Publ. means 42%: because there are a lot of people
- Pedestrian 25%: because I know the streets and am able to choose where to go
- Cyclist 16%: because I know the streets and am able to choose where to go

Pedestrian

- **Pedestrian zones**
 - Good idea 66 %
 - More of them 8 %
 - Without use 8 %
- **Provisional pedestrian zones, e.g. around christmas – more often during year ?**
 - No 83 %
- **Do you feel disturbed by beggars, non-profit organisations etc. when walking ?**
 - No/not much 75 %

Public means

- **Bad experiences with public means?**
(e.g. long waiting times, difficult to reach destinations)
 - During night (Vienna „Night line“) 60%
 - Hard to reach friends at outskirts 60%

Cycling

- **75% going by bike**
 - 67% very satisfied/satisfied
 - 33% very dissatisfied
- **Asking for:**
 - More cycling paths (50%)
 - Better surfaces, wider paths (33 %)

Study 4 Vienna and in general:

Requirements of youngsters

Karin Scharf 2008, Freie Universität Berlin, 2007

- Being able & allowed to be creative (in front of house in the street)
- Feeling of identification with the area: e.g. small cultural events → feeling of identification
- Feeling of security
- Meet other residents „across the road“ → being able to get acquainted

Discussion:


What mobility conditions to provide?

- Satisfy needs related to developmental tasks
- Improvement of housing and environmental conditions, make meeting of residents easier
- Provide security
- Improve infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists
- Improve public means esp. time-tables at night and city outskirts

Co-operation with young people

- → opportunity to express themselves, e.g. environmental development of the vicinity
- → places for developmental tasks in vicinity
 - provide for places to meet indoors (e.g. meeting rooms to be arranged by youngsters, taken care of by youngsters)
 - and outdoors (e.g. benches & other seating & meeting facilities)

Conclusions

- Mobility of high importance (not only) when being young
 - Mobility not necessarily connected to car use in cities → find out potentials by „talking to target group“ and not about target group
 - Planing together with the target group
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- Helps improve traffic safety according to Keskinens levels 1 and 2 of driver behaviour

Thank you for your attention

