



LOCAL EXPERIENCES DATABASE

Genèv'Roule

Geneva - 177,700 inhabitants



Summary description :

"Genèv'Roule" was initially a scheme for the sponsored loan and hire of bicycles set up by the Genevan Red Cross.

Between the months of May and October a certain number of bicycles are available every day (including weekends without charge for the use of residents and tourists in Geneva. During the summer of 2002 four lending sites were opened at "Bains des Pâquis", "Montbrillant", the "Plaine de Plainpalais" and near the "Rues Basses".

There are different types of bicycle available: standard bicycles, electric bicycles, bicycles with a child seat or cart, tandems and scooters. The fleet is renewed each year.

Those wishing to use the service must leave identification and pay a deposit of 50 Swiss francs. Bicycles with advertising panels are available free of charge all day. Old bicycles that are no longer in use are also collected. If possible, they are repaired and sold at modest prices. Alternatively they are broken down for parts and used to repair other bicycles.

Genèv'Roule is a job training programme for asylum seekers without work. The programme has three elements: social integration, eco-friendly travel, and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle.

About 60 asylum seekers have benefited from Genèv'Roule, which has enabled them to take part in a public service programme, and to receive: training in dealing with the public, some technical experience, an introduction to running a small hiring business, health and fitness training, road safety training, experience in sorting and recycling waste, teaching of specialised vocabulary in French, English, and as far as possible, their mother tongue.



Initiator & partners :

Initiator : Genevan Red Cross
Partners : City of Geneva

Duration :

From : 1997
Ongoing

Field (s)

- cycling

Target group(s)

- low income citizens
- all citizens

Objectives

- 1 To encourage urban use of bicycles.
- 2 To employ and train asylum seekers.

Financial aspects

Grant of 150,000 euros from the Municipality of Geneva from September 2002 onwards.

Obtained and/or expected results

- 1 This hire and loan service works well. The number of bicycles rented and lent and the size of the fleet has increased.
In 1998: 7,179 bicycles were lent; 5,209 were rented.
In 2001: 16,807 bicycles were lent; 6,715 were rented.
In 2000, 18 businesses and organisations approached Genèv'Roule with a view to using the bicycles for advertising.
- 2 Every 22nd September, Genèv'Roule actively participates in the "In town without my car!" Day (European Car Free Day). In 2000 a free taxi-tandem service was set up and particularly appreciated in the vicinity of the "Rues Basses".
Genèv'Roule took part in initiatives such as " Park and Bike ", which took place during Bike Week. It is hoped that participation in such activities will encourage the use of bicycles rather than cars. For distances of between 3 and 6 km the bicycle is the fastest way of getting around town.
- 3 Our free hire policy gives people who have not been on a bicycle for some time a chance to try gentle exercise again. The break from sedentary habits can lead in the long term to a change in lifestyle, and even to a preference for travel by bicycle.
Out of every 100 bicycles lent between May and October during the 2000 season, 65 were bought by people who use the system. We hope to continue in this fashion, and that these people's enthusiasm will encourage others to return to their bicycles. Given the above we are almost certainly having an impact on the health and the quality of life of both the people who visit and the people who live in Geneva. Our activity falls within the scope of the World Health Organisation's international campaign for the promotion of physical exercise as a preventative measure against cardiovascular and other diseases, and is also mentioned within the context of sustainable development in Agenda 21 of the Canton of Geneva.
Concerning safety, we lend free helmets to all bicycle users, and staff give safety advice to users as part of the hiring procedure.

Future plans

Genèv'Roule was initially a Red Cross programme that provided work for refugees and a public bicycle service at the same time. When the Red Cross stopped funding the programme, the Municipality of Geneva took over and provided a grant.

Useful information

Internet sites

Genèv'Roule official website.

<http://www.genevroule.ch/>

Explanations on Genèv'Roule bicycle services and a job training programme for asylum seekers.
Available in French.

Municipality of Geneva official website.

<http://www.ville-ge.ch>

Available in French.

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Project co-financed by the European Commission - DG ENVI , LIFE programme

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