Planning and policymaking in the transport sector have gone through dramatic changes over the last decade. In Germany, the rise in environmental awareness since the 1980s has shaped policymakers’ and the publics’ normative perspectives on what constitutes sustainable and environmentally-friendly movement. At the same time, policymakers’ and planners’ practices continue to strongly reflect an ideational framework that is rooted in the organization of traffic flow and the objectification of dynamically-lived mobilities as measurable objects for planning. The ‘system of automobility’ (Böhm et al. 2006, Urry 2004, Geels et al. 2012) remains strongly present, not only in everyday life, but also in policy cultures.

This presentation will look at the case of local policymaking for cycling in the city of Munich, Germany, in order to better understand this changing field of planning and policymaking in the transport sector. I argue that cycling promotion in Munich reflects much more than planning for the bicycle as a sustainable mode of transport. It goes beyond transport planning as such and reflects the new organization of various stakeholders in the making, shaping and changing of policy and mobilities realities in Munich (Tschoerner forthcoming). I ask: How were these changing governance structures in Munich fostered, as well as hindered and limited? And what specific constellations of actors, practices and narratives have been central for fostering new cycling policy in Munich?

Policymakers in Munich increasingly say that by promoting cycling, they aim to foster a ‘new mobility culture’. In practice though, it seems that it is precisely these processes of promotion which are central to such change. The sustainability of everyday cycling practices and the fostering of a more sustainable urban system in Munich thus might rather be described as dependent on not only a ‘new mobility culture’, but furthermore a ‘new policy culture’.

Chihyung Jeon (Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology, South Korea): ‘Dams and Bikes: The Four Rivers Bikeway and the Contested Mobilities in South Korea’

The bicycle often stands for an alternative, eco-friendly form of mobility, and bicycle riders are usually assumed to be “environmental citizens” who express their values and concerns by choosing to bike and demanding better policies and infrastructure for bicycles. In this paper, I complicate this familiar characterization by examining South Korean bicycle riders’ response to the construction of the Four Rivers Bikeway. The Bikeway was planned as a part of the Four Rivers Restoration Project, the biggest construction and development work in Korean history to manage four major rivers in the nation. Whereas environmental groups, experts, and citizens strongly opposed the Restoration Project for its potentially devastating impact on the ecosystem of the rivers, most bicycle riders welcomed and then enjoyed the nationwide network of bicycle roads built along the rivers. As the riders remain indifferent to the broader environmental politics within which their traversing of the “nation’s land” on a bicycle was made possible, they appropriate, and are appropriated by, the political construction (or destruction) of rivers, environment, and mobility. The healthy, nature-loving riders on the Four Rivers Bikeway had a paradoxical effect of masking the environmental consequences of the Four Rivers Restoration Project. In confining themselves within a leisurely, depoliticized mode of bicycle mobility, these riders manifest a peculiar kind of “cycling citizenship,” one that is less self-reflective environmentally and more compliant politically than that of exemplary bicycle riders elsewhere in the world.

Fariya Sharmeen (Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands): ‘Cycling Innovations towards Urban Transitions in Energy, Policy and New Modalities’

While cycling is promoted as a sustainable and active mode of transportation, its use is limited to short intra-urban distances and as a feeder mode to access public transit. A limitation that potentially could be conquered through the provision of unobstructed cycling infrastructures. An example of such is the fast cycling route connecting the twin cities of Nijmegen and Arnhem in the Netherlands, offering a lucrative and healthy alternative to driving or using public transit to work. However not everyone can cycle as fast even when the route is unobstructed owing to either physical or weather conditions or both. To that end, e-bikes and solar bikes can offer superior alternatives ensuring speed, safety and low emission at a relatively reasonable cost.

Along these realisations, cycling is gaining its long overdue attention in shaping sustainable urban regions of the future. Increasingly urban regions are offering innovative and shared modalities including cycling to
improve the living and travel choices in a more sustainable way. Motivational campaigns to promote cycling have also evolved to be more innovative, involving social media and smartphone applications, by means of using kilometre traveled as currency to exchange for retail purchases, for example. Such initiatives, however, often are seen outside of the mainstream transportation planning. Even in a country like Netherlands, bicycle-friendly policies often depend on the activities of the so-called policy entrepreneurs. The recent interest for cycling in the Netherlands and the rapid increase in bicycle use in many cities around the world can in part be attributed to a new generation of active inventive forms of ‘policy entrepreneurship’.

With this view in mind, in this study, we present the ongoing cycling innovations in urban regions, taking the Netherlands as the case study. Further to that we highlight the need for specific policy interventions, the ongoing innovations around it and delineate the role of policy entrepreneurs.

Session 6: Cycling Innovations (poster presentations)

Tobias Barnes Hofmeister (Norwegian University of Science and Technology): ‘Co-creation and persuasive technologies for increased urban cycling: a practice oriented design approach’

Urban mobility practices account for one fifth of global oil consumption, subjecting cities symptomatically to traffic congestion and exhaust fumes. Cycling is often proposed as remedy to improve urban sustainability and its liveability. However, the complex nature of cities reinforces prevailing mobility practices through circular causalities, thus often leaving cycling model shares at marginal levels. The city as material artefact emerges through the interactions of its actors, but once emerging, it affects them through a recurrent relationship in which social and physical structures shape and constrain agency and vice versa. Due to their scale and complex multi-stakeholder nature, cities are incomplete and nonlinear. Thus, their final characteristics are not determined by designers and planners, yet rather their citizens, who can be seen as latent designers. Acknowledging the potentially decisive impact of citizen behaviour for urban transformations, this article explores the effects of involvement and social persuasion to increase bicycle model shares. The analysis draws on social practice theory and explores how co-creation methodologies and socially influencing systems can supplement practice-oriented design interventions. Social practice theory, as a bridge between structure and human agency, focuses on the integration of meanings, materials and competencies into routinised everyday activities. Innovation or replacement of specific practice elements allows for practices to change in space and time. The article presents a methodological approach to alter mobility practices and maintain their new composition through identifying pivotal practice elements to be subjected to socially influencing systems. The discussion illuminates the potential effectiveness of these methodologies and contributes to the development of strategies for supplementing practice-oriented design interventions in the context of urban mobility.

Conor Walsh (University of Leeds): ‘Using early adopters from the 11 Shared-use Electric bike schemes in the UK to build a policy framework to increase adoption and use’

The impressive growth of Bikeshare in cities across five continents is testament to governments trying to encourage cycling in an effort to reduce vehicle numbers in cities. The number of cities operating Bikeshare systems has increased from 13 in 2004 to 855 as of 2014. This can be seen within the more impressive growth of Shared Mobility services in cities, Rideshare services such as Uber and Lyft have become global transport providers overnight. Bikeshare and ride-share which are known as part of the Shared Mobility economy, maximise the use of vehicles by sharing them among multiple users, increase the number of transport options, and reduce transportation costs for users and society at large.

To date there has been little research in the UK context- London excluded. There are 16 cities in the UK offering Bikeshare with over 100,000 casual and annual users (Bikeplus, 2016), the user figures are swelled by the inclusion of London’s Santander Cycles users. There is very little published data on Bikeshare use in the UK, this has changed as Bikeshare, a representative body for Bikeshare operators in the UK, have launched the first UK wide monitoring survey of Bikeshare users which finished in September 2016. This survey includes questions regarding the socio-demographic profile of users, travel behaviour, motivations for use and barriers experienced when using the scheme.

This research will provide early insights into UK Bikeshare through the analysis of these survey results. Of