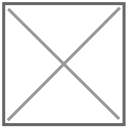




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## An emblematic model of a car-free day: Bogota's Ciclovía



Submitted by [Forum Vies Mobiles](#) on Mon, 05/16/2022 - 09:54

État du projet

Research notes

Visuel

ciclovía Bogota journée sans voiture

Activer

Désactivé

Niveau de profondeur

Balise H2 + H3

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Désactivé

Date

Thu, 05/12/2022 - 11:23

Date du début

Mon, 07/12/2021 - 12:00 - Wed, 05/11/2022 - 12:00

Présentation longue

Contact : Claire-Marine Javary

## Key results

Ciclovía began as a large militant demonstration organized in 1974 to protest how cars dominated the public space of the Colombian capital. Becoming gradually more institutionalized, it is now a pillar of the city's urban policy for leisure and improving

the quality of life of the inhabitants. A true local institution, it requires significant organization and logistical support to safely manage the 127 kilometers of lanes dedicated every Sunday to active modes. There is no doubt that this event of unprecedented scale is a hugely popular success.

## **The history of Ciclovía: from an activist demonstration to an institutionalized event**

Jaime Ortiz Mariño, today an architect and consultant on mobility policies, was the instigator of the "Great Pedal Demonstration" (Gran Manifestación del Pedal) organized in 1974 to protest the proliferation of cars in the city. Inspired by the demands of the American youth and counterculture communities, this movement elevated the bicycle as a symbol of resistance, at the heart of an alternative social and environmental project for the city. A few years later, the event became institutionalized, with the city closing off four corridors of traffic, thus forming a safe network of about 20 kilometers. In the 1980's the event was extended and officially held every Sunday, however a lack of means and political support weakened its development. It was in the 1990s that Ciclovía grew in scope, under the impetus of mayors Antanas Mockus and Enrique Peñalosa who decided to increase its funding tenfold, to open funding to private partners and to strengthen its recreational dimension. By the end of the 1990s, more than 120 kilometers of lanes had been dedicated to active modes, attracting over 1 million inhabitants every week.

## **Ciclovía today: an urban policy based on a recreational event**

Today, Ciclovía is managed and organized by the Department of Leisure and Sports of the Bogotá City Hall, and mobilizes a large number of public actors involved in health, events, youth, but also transport and mobility. The city decided to make the most of this dedicated public space to hold recreational and sports activities (gym, theater ...) in order to attract a wider spectrum of participants and foster social cohesion. The event is also an opportunity to provide information and organize awareness-raising events (civic culture, fight against Covid-19, etc.). It has significant political, financial and administrative support and the 1.4 million euros dedicated every year to its organization allow for the necessary logistics to stage it properly: closing off traffic with barriers and signage, having stewards in charge of supervision, information and security, rolling out activities, etc.

## The initiative's impact

The available data and observations made by research teams allow us to identify the event's main effects:

- **Massive and popular participation:** between 2015 and 2021, Ciclovía attracted an average of 1.5 million inhabitants each week, in a city of 7 million. The main modes used by participants are cycling (68%), followed by walking (22%), skateboarding or scootering (10%) and jogging (10%). Participants stay on average 3 hours at Ciclovía .
- **Creating social ties:** the event is intended to be inclusive and popular, open to all areas of the city, including the poorest. The vast majority of participants (92%) in a 2009 survey identified as working class or middle class. Another study carried out in 2013 shows an increase in social capital among Ciclovía participants: greater self-confidence and stronger sense of mutual trust, connection and solidarity among participants.
- **Positive externalities on health:** according to surveys, participants' main motivation is to practice physical exercise to maintain good health. People who take part in Ciclovía are less sedentary than others: indeed, compared to the average person, they will more likely walk for over 2 hours per week. The event is also a way of improving air quality and reducing noise pollution.
- **A symbolic dimension:** the event offers an alternative urban imaginary, showing what a city could look like with more space dedicated to outdoor activities, more breathable air and less motorized traffic. A world-renowned model since the 2000s, Bogota has inspired new discussions since the Covid-19 crisis on the appropriation of public spaces for active modes.

## The conditions for success

- **A fertile ground for a popular cycling culture:** according to the creator of Ciclovía: "Rich or poor, Colombians love cycling, they have their champions, but they also have access to bicycles and know how to repair them." Cycling is indeed the national sport in Colombia, whether among the working class or the upper classes and political elites. Bicycle shops ("bicicletarias") are present throughout the city.
- **Strong political will:** despite periods of uncertainty, the existence of Ciclovía has never been under threat. The city's different mayors have supported it -

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city's public policy with regards to leisure and improving the quality of life. A source of inspiration for the world's largest cities today, how did this event of unprecedented magnitude develop?

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