Thesis Title:

Urban cycling in Vienna: *How has the political discourse about biking changed from 2005 until 2022?*

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Abstract

While holding the top spot in the global liveability rating Vienna faces difficulties in achieving its climate targets and enhancing urban mobility. Vienna struggles with a relatively low share of bicycle riding compared to walking and public transportation. This study explores how perceptions have changed between 2005 and 2022 in Vienna's political debate on cycling. The study provides insight into the rejection and acceptance of biking as a means of transportation using a critical discourse analysis (CDA) of documents issued by the city council, including urban development plans, coalition agreements, and council discussions. The findings emphasize opposition from right-leaning political parties but also show a rising appreciation of biking's significance, especially in recent plans and agreements. The study explores the potential effects of overt group divisions and identifies recurring patterns, such as a "us vs. them" dichotomy. Although there has been improvement, the research shows that there is still resistance within the municipal council. In addition to the current emphasis on expanding public transportation, the report contends that ongoing efforts are required to increase the popularity of biking as a mode of transportation. Ultimately, by examining the political discourse and attitudes about riding in Vienna, this study contributes to the on-going transformation of urban mobility.

Keywords: *biking, critical discourse analysis, urban mobility, political discourse, Vienna, urban mobility*

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1. Introduction

Vienna has been highly praised as one of the most liveable cities in the world and was ranked first in the global liveability index of 2023. One of the indicators in the ranking to measure liveability has been *"Quality of public transport"* and *"Quality of road network"*. [1] Even though Vienna is praised for being a highly liveable city, in order to reach the EU climate goals and its own objective of urban mobility, the city of Vienna needs to have a look at its current state.[2] When the percentage of travellers utilizing a certain mode of transportation is compared to the ratio of all journeys made, automobiles rank third after walking and public transport.[3] Over the years in Vienna there has been only a small improvement in biking numbers.[4] Compared to other European cities the share is relatively low.[5] The city must find a way to reduce motorized individual modes of transport.[6] One way to do this is by focusing on alternative transportation which fosters a healthier and climate-friendly way of life, for example, biking.[7]

When looking at the users of transportation, Viennese people, in comparison to other EU cities, perceive the car as less important than the average citizen (as seen in table 1.1.). However, the bike is perceived only by 13% of Viennese as one of the two most important modes of transport in daily life. This is far behind the next biggest city in Austria, Graz (42%), and well below the EU average.[8] In addition, figure 1.1 shows that public transport and walking are the main modes of transport in Vienna.

[1] The Economist Intelligence Unit Ltd., 'The Global Liveability Index 2023'.
[2] Telepak and Magistrat der Stadt Wien, *Fachkonzept Mobilität*, 13–16.
[3] Jens, 'Wienerinnen Und Wiener Sind Klimafreundlich Unterwegs: 44% Aller Wege Werden Mit Dem Rad Oder Zu Fuß Erledigt'.
[4] Jens.
[5] UAPS, 2015 in Verwiebe et al., *Lebensqualität in einer wachsenden Stadt - Wiener Lebensqualitätsstudie 2018*, 21.
[6] Telepak and Magistrat der Stadt Wien, *Fachkonzept Mobilität*, 13–16.
[7] Handy, Van Wee, and Kroesen, 'Promoting Cycling for Transport'.
[8] UAPS, 2015 in Verwiebe et al., *Lebensqualität in einer wachsenden Stadt - Wiener Lebensqualitätsstudie 2018*, 21.

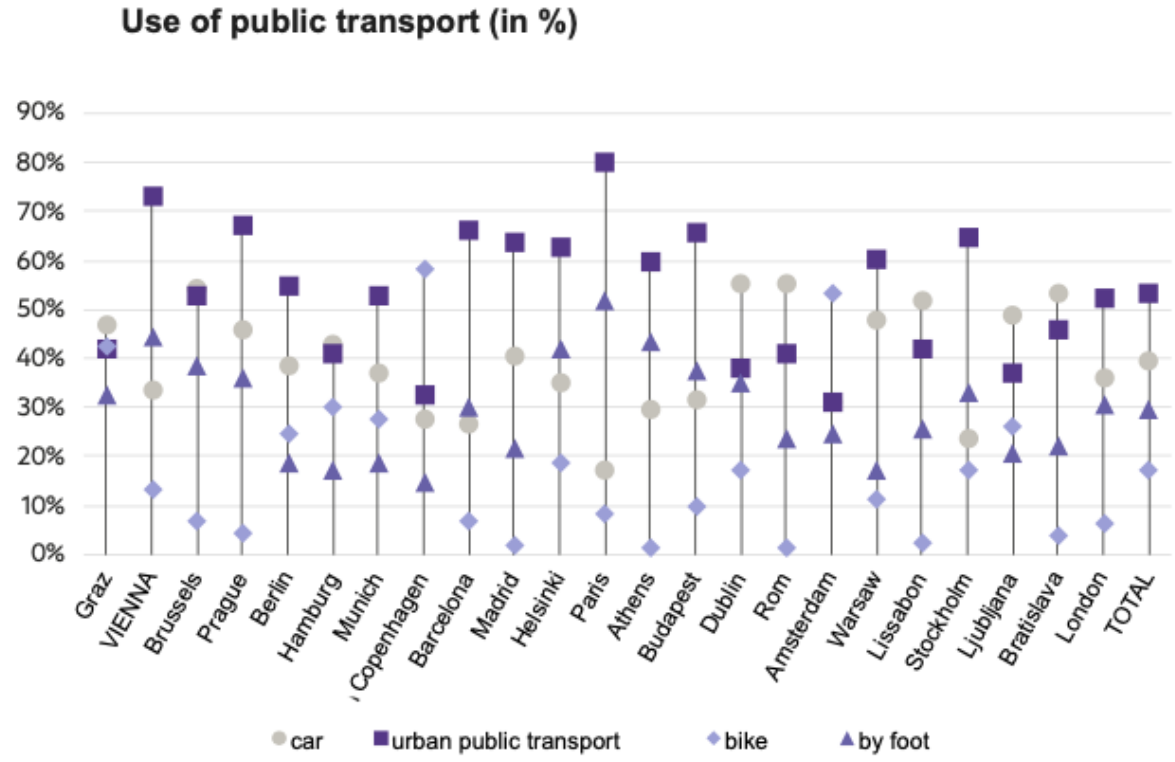

Figure 1.1:Use of public transport (in %)
Source: Adapted from Roland Verwiebe et al., Lebensqualität in einer wachsenden Stadt - Wiener Lebensqualitätsstudie 2018, ed. Werkstattbericht 187, Stadt Wien, Stadtentwicklung und Stadtplanung, 2020. p.22

In terms of bike friendliness, the consultancy firm Copenhagenize Design Co. Publishes yearly ratings of cities since 2011. In their ranking, Vienna has improved over the years. Especially, since 2015 from place 20 to place 9 in 2019.[9] The deliberations for Vienna's ranking noted that the city is seeing growing demand for bike infrastructure and is improving its infrastructure steadily. Nevertheless, to become more bike-friendly and improve its ranking, the city will need to put more money into building safer bike lanes. In the words of Copenhagenize Design Co. forcing bikers to ride next to motorized traffic without physical separation is "outdated and unrealistic".[10] A further change can happen through policy making and implementing regulations targeting city planning with a focus on a long-term strategy for safer mobility and climate-friendly transportation sector.[11] According to Oosterhuis, whose work was a key inspiration for this thesis, neither soft nor hard policies

[9] The ranking for 2021 was not yet published at the date of the writing of this thesis.
[10] Copenhagenize Design Co, '09. Vienna'.
[11] Tiboni et al., 'Urban Policies and Planning Approaches for a Safer and Climate Friendlier Mobility in Cities'.

alone can lead to an increase in cycling levels.[12] So-called soft policies include educational campaigns on the benefits of biking. However, those are mainly recognised by citizens who are already interested in biking and seldomly lead to a change in behaviour in people who perceive biking unfit as a daily mode of transport. Hard policies include physical changes like building bike lanes. In Oosterhuis´ view bicycle policy and research have generally ignored the ongoing impact of (national) culture and history on present numbers and trends in bicycling. However, those factors may constrain the effectiveness of policies. He advises for further research "to consider the historical and national specific interrelations between natural and built environments, traffic infrastructures, meanings and perceptions, and habits and attitudes with regard to cycling.".[13] To apply those suggestions in relation to the perceptions and attitudes towards biking in Vienna is one of the main motivations for this thesis. To study perceptions and attitudes, I will conduct a critical discourse analysis (CDA). CDA considers the way social-power dynamics are enacted, reproduced, legitimated, and resisted by text and speech in a social and political context. [14] The thesis will deal with the power dynamics that are displayed by the city council regarding enforcing transformation to the city's mobility culture or resisting change. The analysis of different documents published by the city council from the recent past should give a clearer picture on how the perception of biking and its importance has developed in Vienna. This thesis will focus on the timespan form 2005 until 2022. Since 2010 party coalitions are holding the mayoral office which presents an interesting juxtaposition of political standpoints which need to find common ground. The decision to start the analysis in 2005 was motivated by the fact that the last urban development plan before the coalition government was published then. By including it a comparison is possible. The urban development plan from 2005, STEP 05, therefore functions as a starting point for this thesis.

[12] Oosterhuis, 'Entrenched Habit or Fringe Mode: Comparing National Bicycle Policies, Cultures and Histories.', 96f.
[13] Oosterhuis, 96f.
[14] Van Dijk, 'Critical Discourse Analysis'.

2. Research question and sub-questions

This thesis aims to address the following research question:

How has the political discourse about biking in Vienna changed from 2005 until 2022?

This is done by answering the following sub-questions:

1. *How has the subject of biking evolved over time in the urban development plans for Vienna from 2005 and 2014?*
2. *How have the governing parties portrayed issues of urban mobility transformation in regard to biking in their coalition agreements of the past three elections?*
3. *How do different political parties frame debates around biking in the city council?*

3. Historical background and main theoretical framework

History of traffic planning in Vienna between 1945 and 2005

In order to frame the discussion on the research questions below I want to give a brief overview of the historic development of the policy on traffic planning in Vienna after the second world war. When the second world war ended in May 1945, big parts of Vienna were heavily affected by the bombings that happened during the last months of the war. The destruction was however not as big as in the big German cities like Cologne or Hamburg, which lead to a focus on reconstruction and not an immediate structural change of the city.[15] The city tried to see the situation also as a chance to get to a better situation and to catch up with the progress in other parts of the world.[16] Of importance for the further traffic planning was the nomination of Karl Heinrich Brunner-Lehenstein in the function of a "Viennese City Planner" (Wiener Stadtplaner), an outside expert hired to advice the city administration. This Viennese professor for city planning had worked since 1929 in South America and there lead the development of about 30 city regulation plans. As an internationally recognized expert he received the task to develop a zoning and building plan for Vienna within 3 years.[17] The focus of Brunner-Lehenstein was how to deal with the expected increase of individual motorized traffic. He suggested to build new streets via flyovers and wanted to reduce the network of the existing tram lines in order to get more space for cars.[18] No focus was given to bikes and bike infrastructure. In the end not a lot of the plans were realized. Nevertheless, some effects were to be seen, streets were made bigger, some tram lines were abandoned. One important means to solve the traffic problem that Brunner-Lehenstein already foresaw as a vision for the future was realized many years later: the underground lines.[19]

In 1958 a new aera started with the nomination of the renowned Austrian architect Roland Rainer as Viennese City Planner. Rainer received the task to develop a city planning base concept and a "general traffic planning" (Generalverkehrsplan). He presented his concept on 30 June 1961 to the city council. Rainer wanted to give pedestrians and busses strict

[15] Denk, '„Zerstörung Als Chance? Städtebauliche Konzepte, Leitlinien Und Projekte in Wien 1945-58."', 13.
[16] Denk, 123.
[17] Pirhofer and Stimmer, *Pläne Für Wien Theorie Und Praxis Der Wiener Stadtplanung von 1945 Bis 2005*, 37.
[18] Pirhofer and Stimmer, 40.
[19] Pirhofer and Stimmer, *Pläne Für Wien Theorie Und Praxis Der Wiener Stadtplanung von 1945 Bis 2005*.

preference in the city centre, stop through traffic but still saw the urgent need for additional streets and to remove hindrances for the individual motorized traffic.[20]

In the early 1970s there was no focus at all on bike infrastructure. The wish to remove hinderances for motorized traffic and the need for more space for public transport even led to a reduction of the existing bike paths. From 23 kilometres of bike paths in 1970 this number went down to 11 kilometres in 1977. Only from 1980 on a steady expansion of the bike paths in Vienna started.[21] In 1976 the city started the works on the development of a new city planning concept. This lead in the end to the publishing of the first city development plan (STEP) in 1985, called the STEP 84.[22] In this STEP 84 a clear shift away from the "car-suited" city can be seen.[23] The new idea was a "city suited traffic".[24] This opened up an opportunity for biking. The focus concerning biking was clearly on biking for recreational purposes.[25] Much more importance was given in the STEP 84 to the further expansion of the underground network. The STEP 84 had based its assumptions on a stagnating or shrinking population in Vienna and no further increase in motorized traffic due to high petrol prices and slow rate of economic growth.[26]

Those assumptions were proven wrong as of 1989. With the fall of the iron curtain, the geopolitical position of Vienna changed dramatically. Vienna, that since 1955 had been on the eastern boarder of Western Europe, suddenly found itself in the centre of Europe. Moreover, with the outbreak of the war in the former Yugoslavian countries in 1991 Vienna faced a strong surge in immigration. This all lead to a scenario of a "growing city".[27] The focus of the city shifted to stimulating economic growth and additional investment in new housing.[28] The traffic planning of the city had to react to this new situation. This led to the development of the "traffic concept 1993". In this concept more space for bike traffic was for the first time clearly seen as an important element. It fit well to the general principles of

[20] Pirhofer and Stimmer, 49–50 and 58.
[21] Stadt Wien, 'Historische Entwicklung Des Wiener Radverkehrsnetzes'.
[22] Stadtentwicklung Wien, Magistratsabteilung 18, *Stadtentwicklungsplan Wien 84*.
[23] Pirhofer and Stimmer, *Pläne Für Wien Theorie Und Praxis Der Wiener Stadtplanung von 1945 Bis 2005*, 76.
[24] Stadtentwicklung Wien, Magistratsabteilung 18, *Stadtentwicklungsplan Wien 84*, 25.
[25] Stadtentwicklung Wien, Magistratsabteilung 18, 27.
[26] Stadtentwicklung Wien, Magistratsabteilung 18, 44–45.
[27] Pirhofer and Stimmer, *Pläne Für Wien Theorie Und Praxis Der Wiener Stadtplanung von 1945 Bis 2005*, 106.
[28] Pirhofer and Stimmer, 116.

the concept to give people in the city priority and to make traffic more environmentally friendly, socially accessible, and safer.[29]

Those elements were taken over by the STEP 94. The main driver named there for changes in the traffic policy was the need to protect the environment. Investment in public transport is seen as key to achieve the needed changes. Biking is named as part of the "Umweltverbund" (public transport, biking, pedestrians) that should increase and "not simply a leisure activity", but at the same time the risk of "marginalization of bike traffic" is addressed.[30] This means that biking was still not seen as an equal means of transport in comparison to public transport, walking and motorized traffic. The next push for biking came with the new "Climate Protection Program" that the city of Vienna published in 1999. With this program the CO2 emissions should be reduced by 27% in comparison to the trend scenario by 2010. 2% reduction were allocated to an increase of biking as a means of transport.[31] This gave the topic a new focus and urgency. The goals of the Climate Protection Program laid the path for the STEP 05 and the later documents that will be analysed in this paper.

Modal split

The following paragraph is going to dive deeper into the change in the modal split in Vienna. Meaning it is going to highlight the documented changes in transport modes in the city. The numbers in the following paragraph are all taken from the fifth wave of the Vienna Quality of Life Study (Wiener Lebensqualitätsstudie).[32]

In the Vienna Quality of Life Study, researchers included the mobility patterns of people living in Vienna. The first striking insight was that walking was the most used mode of transport among the interviewed persons. Up to 88% of interviewees decided to walk instead of using other modes of transport several times a week. The second most used mode of transport was public transport and cars third. This survey also gave a good insight into the patterns of bike usage of the Viennese. People tend to use bikes more when the season is "nice", whereas people use their bikes very rarely in winter. More concretely, 79% never use

[29] Pirhofer and Stimmer, 126.
[30] Kotyza, Stadtplanung Wien, and Vienna (Austria), *Step 1994*, 178.
[31] Magistratsabteilung 22 - Umweltschutz, *Klimaschutzprogamm Wien*, 149.
[32] Verwiebe et al., *Lebensqualität in einer wachsenden Stadt - Wiener Lebensqualitätsstudie 2018*.

a bike in winter (table 3.1). And even in summer, the bike is only the 4th favourite mode of transport with only 25% using the bike several times a week.[33]

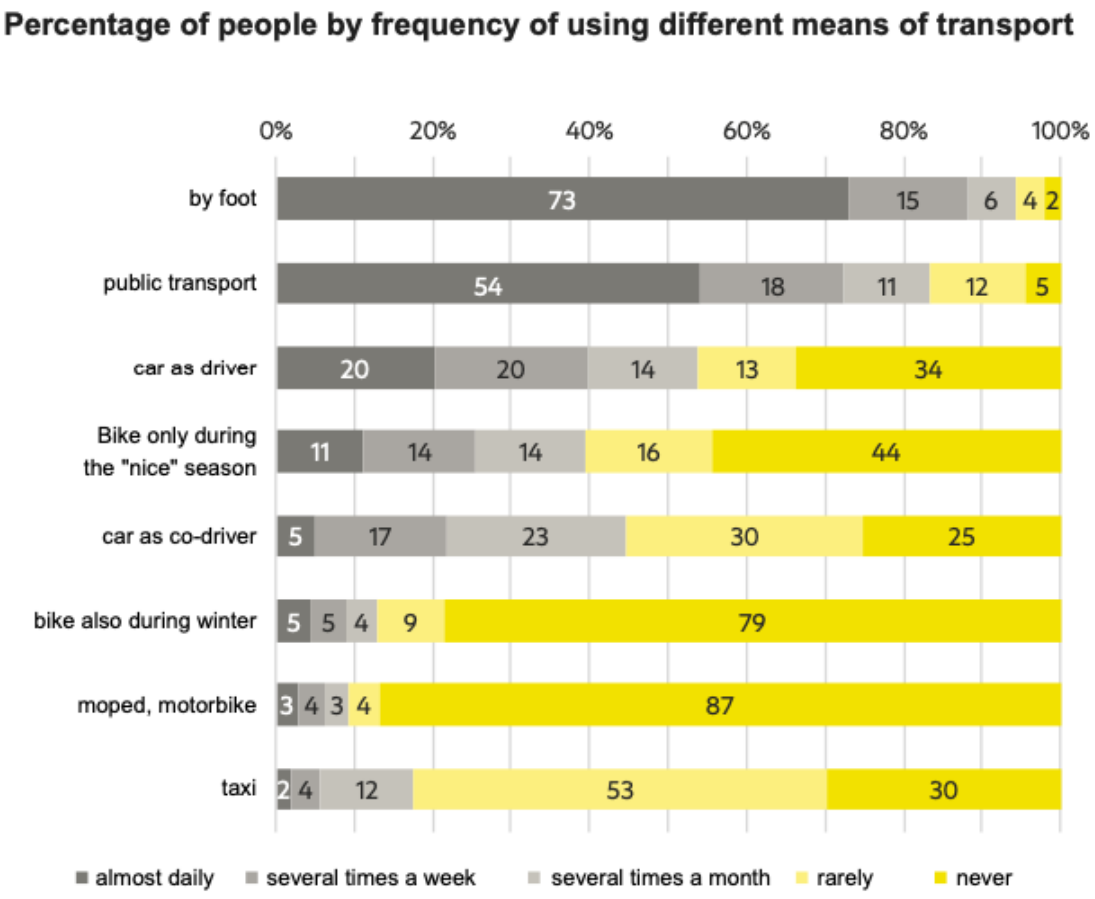

Table 3.1:Percentage of people by frequency of using different means of transport
Source: Adapted from Roland Verwiebe et al., Lebensqualität in einer wachsenden Stadt - Wiener Lebensqualitätsstudie 2018, ed. Werkstattbericht 187, Stadt Wien, Stadtentwicklung und Stadtplanung, 2020. p.196

The survey further detailed the main means of transport for various routes (table 3.2.). Walking is mostly used for going shopping and accompanying children to school/ kindergarten. For going to work or university, people prefer taking public transport or the car. Likewise, to reach leisure activities, people use public transport or the car. This shows for one that on a daily basis, the bike is a less frequent choice. And secondly, that if it is used then the most dominant route is the way to work. However, the bike is very rarely used for shopping or with children.

[33] Verwiebe et al.

Main means of transport on different routes (in %)

Which means of transport do you mainly use …	car	public transport	combination car/public transport	bike	by foot	others, eg.: moped,taxi
for the way from and to your place of work/study?	22	58	3	7	8	2
for shopping and errands (eg. official channels, seeing a doctor)?	27	17	3	5	48	1
to accompany children to kindergarden or school?	26	29	2	5	38	0
for other leisure activities?	29	50	8	5	6	2

Table 3.2: Main mains of transport on different routes (in %)
Source: Adapted from Roland Verwiebe et al., Lebensqualität in einer wachsenden Stadt - Wiener Lebensqualitätsstudie 2018, ed. Werkstattbericht 187, Stadt Wien, Stadtentwicklung und Stadtplanung, 2020. p.197

In a survey that was done 2008, 2013 and 2018 people were asked how often they use certain modes of transport per week. From 2008 to the year 2013, the share of persons who ride multiple times a week when the weather is favourable increased dramatically (from 20% to 30% of respondents). Yet in 2018, this share fell significantly (to 25%). On the other side, the number of persons who claim they pedal in the winter increased in 2018. However, this rise occurred gradually. In 2008 and 2013, 5% of respondents reported cycling several times each week throughout the winter. Only from 2013 to 2018 was there a 5% to 9% growth. From this survey one can see that even though cycling in winter is gradually done by more people it is still not as common as cycling in warmer temperatures.[34]

Modal split depending on district

The following paragraph paints a more detailed picture of the modal split depending on districts and details the segregation that exists in bike usage across the city. Based on the 2019 national election results, a relatively clear pattern becomes visible in Vienna (see figure 3.1). Voters in the outer districts tended to vote more for the conservative party (ÖVP) and in some outer districts, votes for the far-right party (FPÖ) even overtook the conservative party. Whereas the districts in the core of Vienna show a different voter preference. There the predominant parties were the green party (GRÜNE) and the social democratic party (SPÖ).

[34] Verwiebe et al., 200.

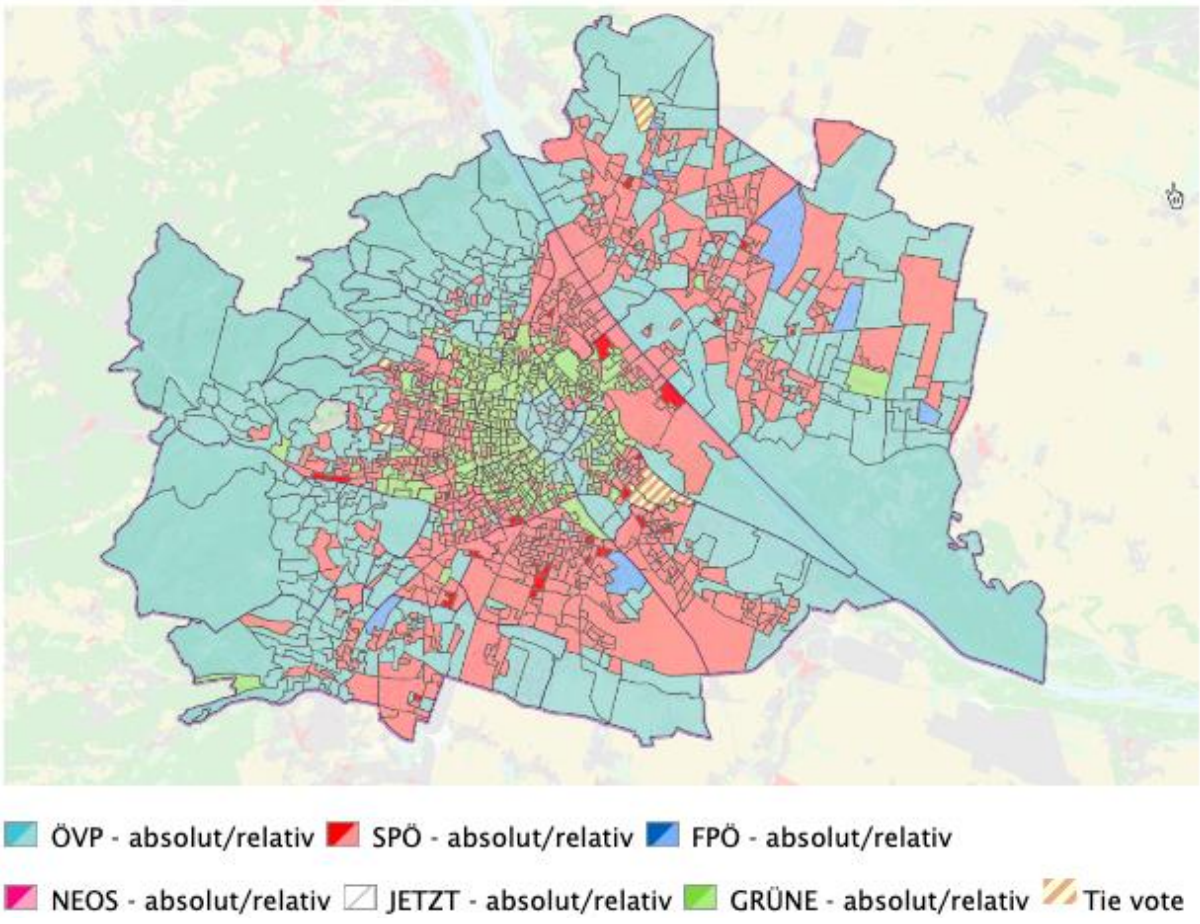

Figure 3.1:District Results of the National Council Election 2019
Source: Stadt Wien, 'Sprengelergebnisse Der Nationalratswahl 2019', Stadt Wien, accessed 20 June 2023, https://www.wien.gv.at/politik/wahlen/nr/2019/sprengel.html.

These voting patterns loosely correlate with different built environments and attitudes toward environmental concerns. In Vienna´s inner city districts, one finds a physical environment that was predominantly constructed in the nineteenth century, has a lower share of housing funded by the public sector, and a higher percentage of immigrants. Further, the habitus of inner-city dwellers and gentrification processes have led to the formation of infrastructure arrangements that include a dense net of public transport, separate roads for bikes, and more pedestrian streets.[35] Bärnthaler et al. document that in the outer districts of Vienna the number of privately owned cars is higher, and the public transport provision is not as dense as in the centre. Further, residents of the outer districts

[35] Bärnthaler, Novy, and Stadelmann, 'A Polanyi-Inspired Perspective on Social-Ecological Transformations of Cities', 11.

tend to oppose the move away from traditional mobility and energy practices sourced from non-renewable sources.[36]

An analysis of weekly use of different means of transport (figure 3.2) shows that in the outer districts (11., 13., 21- 23. districts) the use of motorized vehicles is higher than the average. In contrast, the lowest weekly use of motorized vehicles can be found in the inner districts third and seventh. Moreover, the distribution of the share of people using cars as passengers is quite similar in all the districts and shows a low margin of fluctuation when comparing Vienna's districts. Interestingly, the distribution of bike usage in the different districts has a high variation depending on which district one considers. Namely, 40% of survey participants in the second inner city district indicated that they use a bike several times a week. Other districts that showed above-average weekly bike trips were inner city districts 4-5th and 7th. The lowest weekly use of bikes (16%) was recorded in the 19th district, which is also an outer city district.[37]

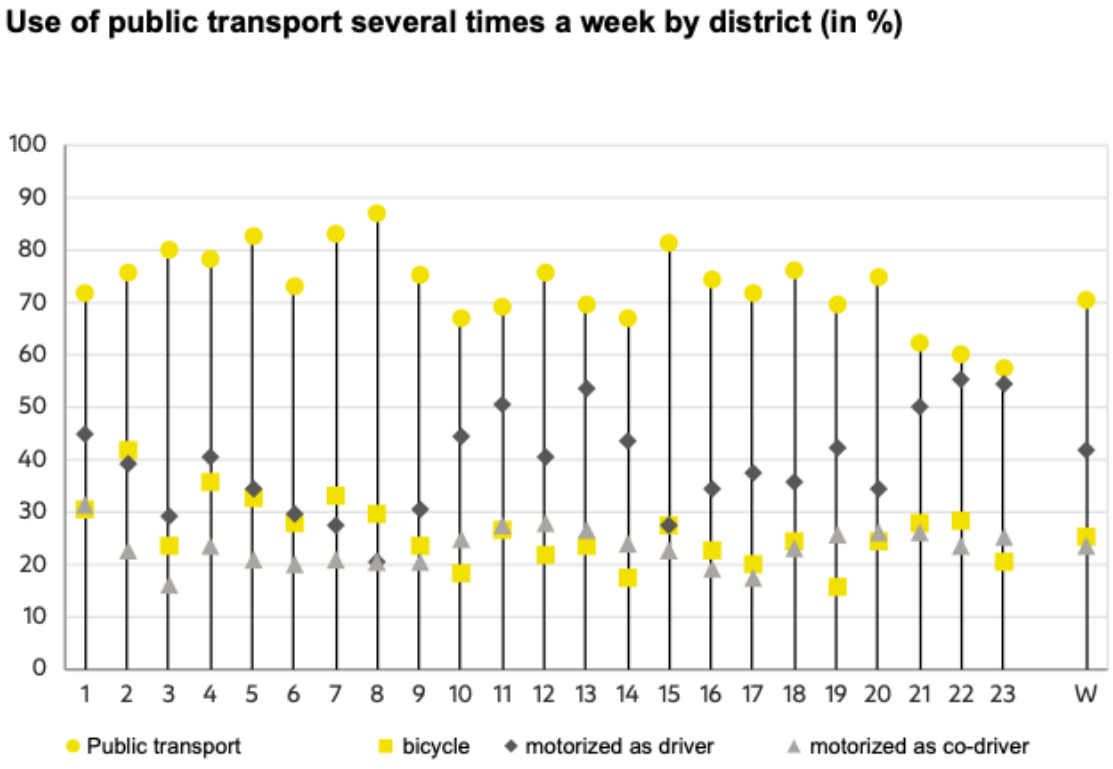

Figure 3.2:Use of public transport several times a week by district (in %)
Source: Roland Verwiebe et al., Lebensqualität in einer wachsenden Stadt - Wiener Lebensqualitätsstudie 2018, ed. Werkstattbericht 187, Stadt Wien, Stadtentwicklung und Stadtplanung, 2020.p.199

[36] Bärnthaler, Novy, and Stadelmann, 'A Polanyi-Inspired Perspective on Social-Ecological Transformations of Cities'.
[37] Verwiebe et al., *Lebensqualität in einer wachsenden Stadt - Wiener Lebensqualitätsstudie 2018*, 199.

4. Literature Review

Before diving into the analysis, I want to highlight a few points of the existing body of research into urban biking. The literature review provides a basis for the following analysis of documents. One can see that mobility choices are a question of habits, routines, and infrastructure.

Self-selection

On the one hand, Vienna has been praised for its inexpensive public transport abonnement which since its introduction has improved the number of ticket holders. However, at the same time, Bärnthaler et al. note that the city government has still not renounced transport regulations that prioritize cars. And there has been only a relatively moderate extension of bike paths and public places. In comparison to the imminent threats due to climate change, the policies have been too timid. To achieve a positive change, location and context must be taken into account. Bärnthaler et al. highlight that a move away from non-renewable modes of transport is easier to achieve in the inner districts of Vienna than in the outskirts.[38]

In a study of the subjective and objective quality of life in Vienna with respect to green spaces and public transport, Haslauer et al. pointed out that the city centre has only a small number of green spaces however the satisfaction rates of the accessibility of green spaces in these areas are relatively high. This they argue is due to a certain degree of self-selection – people choosing to live in the inner city who are often younger people valuing vibrant urban life more than the accessibility of green spaces and therefore perceive the limited supply of green spaces as acceptable.[39] Self-selection could also be at play in Vienna regarding the discrepancy between inner and outer district cycling rates. Citizens who do prefer to be less reliant on autos chose to live in the inner city.

Processes of de- and re-routinisation

The experimental approach of Laasko in order to study the change in daily routines after quitting the use of automobiles demonstrates that the re- and de-routinisation process is

[38] Bärnthaler, Novy, and Stadelmann, 'A Polanyi-Inspired Perspective on Social-Ecological Transformations of Cities'.
[39] Haslauer et al., 'Comparing Subjective and Objective Quality of Life Criteria: A Case Study of Green Space and Public Transport in Vienna, Austria'.

dependent on many structural and personal variables that reinforce one another. To just list a few influences, the paper mentioned changes in daily routines were dependent on public transport schedules, participants demonstrated a change in grocery shopping patterns and saw the commute to work as a time that could be used to exercise by running to work. Further, participants re-prioritized different trips or even decreased the overall number of trips taken. Some perceived the time lost due to being dependent on a public transport schedule as negative whereas others found that they could use the time in public transport productively. Lastly, some participants generated some negative feelings about being dependent on other people's cars. This shows that if municipalities want to promote living without cars, municipalities need to provide increased assistance and infrastructure to do so.[40] Hence, if Vienna wants to decrease motorization and increase biking as part of sustainable means of infrastructure, planning is key.

Cycling culture and history

Both Bruntlett and Bruntlett and Colville-Andersen are firmly convinced that geographical terrain and weather only have little impact on the motivation to use a bike. They believe the high numbers of cyclists in the Netherlands and Denmark for example are due to the extensive cycling infrastructure and not because those places are relatively flatter.[41] The structure of a city might not allow as high a percentage of the population to participate in cycling as in Copenhagen. Nevertheless, Colville-Andersen argues a share of 20% is doable for every city.[42] Further, he notes that the urban transformation in Amsterdam and Copenhagen took plus 40 years. It was a slow steady development and a feedback loop of improving infrastructure and increasing demand of bike riders that have led to the arrangements in Amsterdam and Copenhagen, which are nowadays the role models of urban bicycle structure. There are many examples of cities which have improved their bicycle share in a shorter time than 40 years by replicating best practice examples from Copenhagen or Amsterdam. One core argument Colville-Andersen highlights is that it is not a question of if demand for bicycle infrastructure exists. Infrastructure will create increased usage.[43]

[40] Laakso, 'Giving up Cars – The Impact of a Mobility Experiment on Carbon Emissions and Everyday Routines'.
[41] Bruntlett and Bruntlett, 'Introduction: A Nation of Fietsers'; Colville-Andersen, *Copenhagenize*.
[42] Colville-Andersen, *Copenhagenize*, 98.
[43] Colville-Andersen, 112.

Also, te Brömmelstroet et al. write that the bicycle culture in the Netherlands developed over a long period of time and became an everyday habit despite the rise of accessibility of cars. Using a bike has formed a collective routine.[44] Similarly, Bruntlett and Bruntlett write that in the Netherlands the bike is firstly seen as a mode of transport rather than a fitness device.[45] Looking at Vienna, bikers here are not granted the same unquestioned status like in cities in the Netherlands or Demark. In a 2019 survey in Vienna 32% of questioned pedestrians named bikes to be the biggest burden or source of anger, e-scooters were named second (28%), followed by cars (25%). The publisher of the study interprets the outcome as a sign that there still exists a type of rivalry for public space usage, prompted by the continued high percentage of motorized traffic in urban settings.[46] This gives a quick insight into the uphill battle Vienna is facing to normalize biking as a mode of transport.

Habitus and bikes in Vienna

Hachleintner states his theory that the low share of bikes in the modal split in Vienna can be explained by the "habitus" of the town. The idea of a city having a habitus is based on Bourdieu's theory of the term habitus to refer to the way that people's experiences and socialization shape their perceptions and actions. The habitus is made up of a set of ingrained attitudes, ways of thinking, and ways of acting that are acquired through one's experiences and interactions within a particular social environment. Given the different habitus of cities, Hachleintner argues that some cities are more prone to develop into cities with a high share of bikers than others. Nevertheless, that does not mean that a habitus, and with that a city, cannot change. It just might take some more time.[47] The following two instances are examples of the habitus that exists in Vienna, which might be described as less bike friendly. In 2012, Michael Häupl[48] the long-standing mayor of Vienna said in an interview that for him as a man in his 60s biking in Vienna is too dangerous and he is not

[44] te Brömmelstroet, Boterman, and Kuipers, 'How Culture Shapes - and Is Shaped by - Mobility'.
[45] Bruntlett and Bruntlett, 'Not Sport. Transport.', 32.
[46] Mobilitätsagentur Wien, 'Vienna Mobility Report 2019'.
[47] Hachleitner, 'Infrastruktur, Topographie Oder Doch Politik Und Kultur? Eine Historische Analyse von Faktoren Der Radverkehrsentwicklung Wiens Im Vergleich Mit Anderen Städten'; Bourdieu, *Zur Soziologie der symbolischen Formen*.
[48] For readers not familiar with Viennese politics it might be worth pointing out that Mr. Häupl was essentially the embodiment of the stereotypical laid-back lifestyle of Vienna

biking.[49] Another illustration of how unusual biking is in Vienna, is when the Danish diplomat Liselotte Plesner invited 14 diplomates in 2016 to arrive by bike to a new year's reception. This happening created headlines.[50]

[49] THURNHER, and KLENK, 'Da Geh Ich Lieber Ins Wirtshaus!'
[50] Bauer, 'Botschafter: Jo, Wir San Mit 'm Radl Do'.

5. Methodology

This chapter describes the research design and methods used in this thesis. To answer my sub-questions and ultimately my research question, a mixed-method approach was used. Table 5.1. provides an overview of each sub-question with the corresponding sources and analysis. The next section will first present CDA and then introduce the data collection, followed by how the analysis is conducted.

Sub - Question	Source	Analysis
How has the subject of biking evolved over time in the urban development plans for Vienna from 2005 and 2014?	Urban development plans	Discourse Analysis using Frequency analysis and Content analysis
How have the governing parties portrayed issues of urban mobility transformation in regard to biking in their coalition agreements of the past 3 elections?	Coalition agreements (2010,2015,2020)	Discourse Analysis using Frequency analysis, Content analysis
How do different political parties frame debates around biking in Vienna*?*	Protocols of town council meetings	Discourse analysis using Content analysis

Table 5.1:Overview source and type of analysis
Source: own table

Discourse analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was chosen as an appropriate approach to investigate the political discourse of biking as a mode of transport in Vienna from 2005 until 2022, since its considerations of the way social-power dynamics are enacted, reproduced, legitimated, and resisted by text and speech in a social and political context.[51] Using critical discourse analysis in this context focuses on the power structures within Viennese political discourse and how it is established and reinforced through language in publicly available documentation. In this paper, the term political discourse and available documentation refer to the proceedings and policy documents written or signed off by the city council.

[51] Van Dijk, 'Critical Discourse Analysis'.

The approach to use critical discourse analysis for the thesis topic leans on Caimotto's works on the stigmatization of bikers in UK newspapers. She analyses how bicyclists are depicted in the press by examining discursive strategies that establish a 'us vs. them' storyline when discussing bikers and pro-biking campaigners. [52] This approach is intriguing especially in the context of Vienna to find out if there is a similar "us vs. them" pattern toward cyclists. Further, Caimotto analyses the transport policy of the mayor of London, concluding that the language chosen in the policy paper presents the mobility transition as something that will run easily and is very much focused on the beneficial outcomes. However, it is neglecting to mention that a successful transition will entail a change in daily routines. Lastly, she points out that the London policy suggests that economic growth and a sustainable future are not mutually exclusive. [53] This study not only provides new insights into the language used in policy documents for biking policy in Vienna but also explores if Caimotto's work and its conclusions are replicable in different cities and their cultural background. As Jäger points out a discourse can never be fully covered but segmented projects make sense, because they also allow us to draw conclusions and can be the foundation for a transformation in the perception of a topic, in this case biking in Vienna.[54]

Data collection

This chapter will go into more detail on the list of sources mentioned above, which are used to answer my research questions. Since researching the political discourse about biking in Vienna is the focal point of this thesis, documents were chosen that reflected the standpoint of Vienna's governing bodies.

Urban development plans

The urban development plans (Stadtentwicklungsplan, STEP) are produced by the City of Vienna with the consultation of outside experts. The plans work as a guideline on how the city is supposed to develop in the future.

The reports relevant to this thesis given the timeframe that I want to analyse are STEP 05 and STEP 25. The city council decided on the final version of the STEP 05 in May 2005 and

[52] Caimotto, 'Stigmatisation in Newspapers'.
[53] Caimotto, 'London Mayor's Transport Strategy'.
[54] Jäger, *Kritische Diskursanalyse*, 121.

the STEP 25 was signed off by the city council in December 2014.[55] The STEP 25 breaks with the tradition to name the plan after the publishing year. It was published in 2014 but was intended to work as a guideline for development until 2025.

The authors of STEP 05 put the most focus on how Vienna was going to be affected by globalization and increased economic linkages to the surrounding region (within the country but also across the border). This comes against the backdrop that in 2004 ten new countries joined the European Union. With the enlargement of the European Union to the east, Vienna was suddenly situated more in the centre of the European Union. The consensus was that the strengthening of economic ties in the region would not only affect the economic sector but also the living conditions of the people of Vienna regarding changing working conditions, mobility and leisure time activities.[56] Further, the plan included aims for the sustainable development of the city. The focus lay on increasing public transport to curb motorized private transport, sustain greenspace surrounding the city and ensure that new city developments are built in a resource-efficient way.[57]

As already mentioned, one big change for the new STEP 25 was that already in its name it changed the perspective to the future. This brought the focus on the expected growth of the city. Especially the growth in population. Another focus is put on the so-called smart cities. The two topics of population growth and smart cities come together in the chapter on mobility. While technological development is seen as a chance to change the way we move around in the city (more efficient use of different modes of transport, more sharing concepts, higher efficiency in public transport), the pressure to bring a change to the modal split rises automatically with the expected increase of inhabitants. With no change to the modal split, the authors expected an increase in car traffic in the city by 12%.[58] However, this would clearly jeopardize their commitment to a liveable city. This leads to the goal of 80 – 20: By 2025 80% of all distances covered by the people of Vienna should be done by public transport, walking or by bike (those modes of transport together called “the

[55] Mittringer and Magistrat der Stadt Wien, *STEP 05 - Stadtentwicklung Wien 2005*; Telepak and Magistrat der Stadt Wien, *Fachkonzept Mobilität*.
[56] Mittringer and Magistrat der Stadt Wien, *STEP 05 - Stadtentwicklung Wien 2005*, 16.
[57] Mittringer and Magistrat der Stadt Wien, 196.
[58] Stadtentwicklung Wien Magistratsabteilung 18 – Stadtentwicklung und Stadtplanung, *STEP 25 Stadtentwicklungsplan Wien*, 102.

Umweltverbund"), while individual motorized transport should be at a level of only 20%.[59] As seen in the graphic below (Figure 5.1) in 2012 the share of cars in the modal split was at 27%.

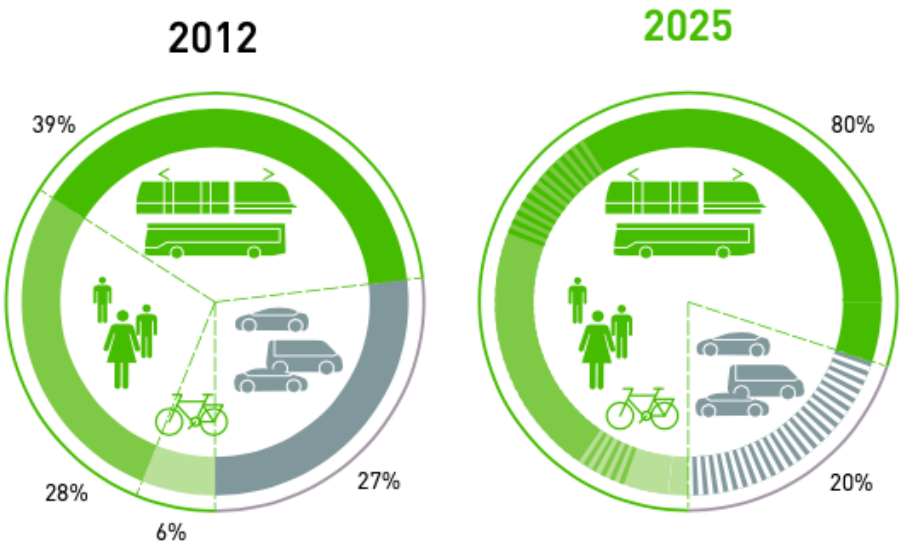

Figure 5.1:Modal split 2012 and aim for 2025.
Source: Stadtentwicklung und Stadtplanung, ed. STEP 25 Stadtentwicklungsplan Wien, 2014. p.106

At this point, it should be noted that the real population growth exceeded the Step25 expectations, mainly due to the refugee crisis in 2015 and more recently the war in Ukraine from 2022 onwards. The "main scenario" laid out in STEP25 expected 1.910.000 inhabitants by 2025. And the "growth scenario" predicted 1.976.000 inhabitants as a maximum by 2025. In reality, the number of inhabitants has already now exceeded the "growth scenario" for 2025.[60] On 1 January 2023 as many as 1.982.422 inhabitants lived in Vienna. [61]

Coalition agreements

While the STEP documents are official policy documents of the city of Vienna, the next data collection documents the viewpoints of the ruling political parties. For this, I chose to analyse the coalition agreements concluded after the past three elections in Vienna.

[59] Stadtentwicklung Wien Magistratsabteilung 18 – Stadtentwicklung und Stadtplanung, 106.
[60] Stadtentwicklung Wien Magistratsabteilung 18 – Stadtentwicklung und Stadtplanung, 15.
[61] ORF, 'Wien Bald Zwei-Millionen-Stadt'.

To understand the background of those agreements it must be noted that after the election of the town council (Gemeinderat) a majority is needed to elect the mayor and the city councillors that form the government of the city (Stadtregierung).[62] Except for one election in 1996, the social democratic party won an absolute majority in all elections between 1973 until 2010.[63] Therefore, in all those years no coalition agreement was needed to reach a majority in the town council. In the elections of 2010, 2015 and 2020, this changed. The social democratic party only reached a relative majority and had to look for a partner to form a government. With the respective partner, after all three past elections in Vienna, a coalition government was formed. In the coalition agreements, the parties outline their plans for the legislative period. In the years 2010-2015 and 2015-2020, a coalition of the social democratic (SPÖ) and the green party (Grüne) was ruling and since 2020 the coalition of the social democratic (SPÖ) and the liberal party (Neos) are in power. It must be noted that based on the election results in all those coalitions SPÖ was the stronger partner while the other parties always joined the coalition as the "junior" partner (2010: SPÖ 44,34%, GRÜNE 12,64%; 2015: SPÖ 39,59%, GRÜNE 11,84%; 2020: SPÖ 41,62%, NEOS 7,47%). [64] All the three participating parties have their strongholds in the inner districts of Vienna, where, as explained already in Chapter 3 (see Figure 3.1), biking is much more accepted than in the outer districts.

The coalition agreements cover all political topics in the competence of the city. And traffic policy is one of the core competences of the city and therefore this topic is given substantial attention in all the three coalition agreements.

The protocols of town council meetings (Gemeinderatssitzungen)

The city development plans are based on multilateral input and expert opinions. Nevertheless, the final version has to be accepted by the ruling parties and therefore is heavily influenced by their side. The coalition agreements naturally only include the views of the two participating parties (social democratic and green or social democratic and liberal). Therefore, the thesis includes transcripts of the city council meetings as a third source for the research to represent a broader political spectrum and to analyse the opinion of the

[62] oesterreich.gv.at-Redaktion, 'Wiener Wahlen'.
[63] APA – Austria Presse Agentur, 'Koalition in Wien: 1996 Hieß Der Partner ÖVP'.
[64] Stadt Wien, 'Gemeinderatswahlen'.

opposition. The municipal council has 100 members in total. The tenure of office is five years. The municipal council makes financial decisions as well as critical legislation such as rezoning and building plans. It is the city's top authority. The mayor, vice mayors, and city councillors are also elected by the municipal councillors.[65]

I have chosen three debates to analyse them as pars pro toto. The following paragraph is going to explain the reasoning behind why I chose these three specific debates. Firstly, I wanted to pick one debate from each of the three legislative periods to be able to see if there is a change in the discourse over time or if some views persist. Further, the aim was to find debates in which different political parties participated in that way the analysis could reflect different political views. Lastly, I chose debates that were concerning different aspects of biking in the city.

All protocols of the council meetings are collected and freely available on the website of the city of Vienna. Searches in the online archive are made accessible through an extended search tool. I was able to go through each legislative period separately. First, I looked for full meeting protocols that contained the words Radfahren OR Radweg OR Fahrrad (Cycling OR cycle path OR bicycle). This search yielded 117 proceedings in 2010-2015, 144 proceedings in 2015-2020, and 87 proceedings from 2020 till now.[66] The number of proceedings includes council meetings but also written requests and answers to such. Since there were too many records to go through all of them, I limited the search further by filtering for texts that had the word Radweg (bike path) or Fahrrad (bicycle) in the title. Then the texts were refined to debates that had a verbatim transcript. Since the urban development plans and the coalition agreements were written sources the aim was to diversify the research by picking the verbatim transcript. Even though these are mostly prepared speeches there is still a difference from the other sources. These speeches are given to a live audience and interaction with the other council members is also noted in the protocols. When looking at speeches the reader must be aware of persuasive methods, such as a favourable presentation of the speaker´s view against negative presentation of others, populist language, and so on.[67]

[65] Stadt Wien, 'Wiener Gemeinderat'.
[66] At the date of writing the last available meeting was 25. April 2023.
[67] Wodak, 'Ruth Wodak: Discourses of Exclusion: Xenophobia, Racism and Anti-Semitism', 404.

For the period 25.11. 2010 – 24.11.2015 which is the 19th legislative period the following topics came up in my search: motions regarding bicycle parking, the allocation of funds for bicycle infrastructure, new traffic rules favourable for bike traffic, future plans of bike infrastructure, and undisciplined cyclists. The protocol I chose, in the end, is a debate initiated by the FPÖ under the title “Elimination of existing grievances that disturb local community life, caused by "bicycle hooligans”.[68]

For the 20th legislative period (25.11.2015- 24.11.2020) most proceedings concerned the issues of construction of bicycle and scooter parking facilities, sufficient provision of bicycle boxes in public spaces, bicycle safety, several motions for-and-against the construction of new bike paths, funding for transport bikes and the installation of speed bumps on cycle paths at sensitive points. For the 20th legislative period, I went with the debate about the promotion of transport bikes.[69]

For the third text, I searched for debates in the 21st legislative period (started on 25.11.2020 and will end after the next elections that will take place in October 2025 at the latest) that focused on bike paths since I wanted to include another topic that was not yet incorporated in the preceding debates. 30 different search hits came up when I looked for proceedings of the municipal council on bike paths. Some motions concerned the construction of paths on certain streets, other requests were about why some constructions were not finished in time and some requests were concerned with the effect of bike paths on motorized private transport. The chosen protocol is from September 2022 and pertains to bike path constructions in several districts in Vienna.[70]

Analysis of data

Frequency analysis

For a first step in the analysis of both the two urban development plans STEP 05 and STEP 25 and the three coalition agreements from 2010, 2015 and 2020, I conducted a frequency analysis. This is an attempt to start with an analysis that uses objective criteria rather than reading the text and directly analysing the content. By using the software Altlas.ti, I

[68] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, ‘Wörtliches Protokoll 19/27’.
[69] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, ‘Wörtliches Protokoll 20/65’.
[70] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, ‘Wörtliches Protokoll 21/26’.

generated wordlists from which I could see how often certain words come up per document.[71] First, I looked for the various appearances of the word "bicycle" (Fahrrad and synonym Rad). The keywords that the system detected show a wide variety of combinations starting with the term "rad". In a first step, I had to filter out words that started with the term "rad", however are not linked to cycling at all. This is for example the case for the word "radical" ("radikal" in German), which is used quite frequently in the coalition agreements as they also discuss the prevention of terrorist attacks. When only looking at the words starting with "bicycle" it turned out that some topics that should be included were left out. That is why I added to my search the term for cargo bikes and shared bikes. Furthermore, when reading the STEP documents and the coalition agreements, it became clear that sometimes even though the documents are entirely written in German, the English word "bike" is used. Therefore, I also added the word "bike" to the search terms. Since the urban development plans include tables and pictures the frequency analysis can include words that are just in the description of pictures or in the glossary. This might skew the analysis a little bit. In contrast to the urban development plans the coalition agreements do not include any pictures or tables. This means the keywords come all from plain text. After filtering out non-relevant hits and adding cargo and shared bikes and the English term "bike" as additional search terms the results showed around 40 different words related to bicycles in the two STEP documents and almost 60 different words in the three coalition agreements. Those two lists seemed too big to draw conclusions from and therefore I grouped the words according to subjects that were discussed in the agreements. This grouping according to subjects also made the comparison over time more comprehensive.

The frequency analysis should act as an exploration of patters and form a foundation for the following content analysis.

Content analysis

Zhang and Wildemuth explain that content analysis enables researchers to get a subjective yet scientific understanding of social life. Since in comparison to the frequency analysis it goes beyond just calculating words or collecting factual material from writings. Qualitative content analysis investigates interpretations, concepts, and patterns that may be present in

[71] Scientific Software Development GmbH, 'Atlas.Ti'.

a given source.[72] In order to analyse the content of the urban development plans, coalition agreements, and town council meetings I used the software Atlas.ti.[73] This software is also recommended by other researchers for coding purposes.[74] After reading the source material I chose the codes inductively to create a structure for the analysis. Inductively, in this context, refers to the codes being derived from the data rather than a predetermined framework. The arrangement of codes made it simple for me to identify and emphasize the similarities and contrasts between the sources. In the case of the urban development plans and the coalition agreements, I used the same codes for each set of documents. That way I could document a change over time in the documents. However, the debate topics were very individual for each city council meeting, therefore I coded each document individually. The focus here lay more on the language used in the individual meetings rather than a temporal comparison. Nevertheless, there was some overlap between the council debates.

Potential shortcomings of the method and source criticism

This study is exploratory and interpretative in nature. It is exploratory because based on the research conducted there has not yet been made any research into the language used in policy documents for biking policy in Vienna. Further, it is interpretive because it is based on qualitative data. Due to the chosen sources will the findings of this research be quite case-specific, and the findings probably cannot be generalized. Especially in case of the town council meetings the chosen meetings spotlight a specific situation and cannot display the discourse throughout the whole timespan. Further, critical discourse analysis relies on the interpretation of the researcher, meaning it is possible that some findings might be highly subjective. Nevertheless, with the methods and sources that I have chosen, I hope to add to the common arguments of why the bike share is so small in Vienna and only growing slowly compared to other cities. In the literature review, I have shown that infrastructure and culture rather than topology or geographic circumstances are significant for a high cycling share in a city. I want to investigate if there is a certain mindset and or language used in the discourses around mobility transformation. And if the discourse has changed overtime or if there is some reluctance towards increasing biking in the city to be detected.

[72] Zhang and Wildemuth, 'Qualitative Analysis of Content'.
[73] Scientific Software Development GmbH, 'Atlas.Ti'.
[74] Zhang and Wildemuth, 'Qualitative Analysis of Content'.

6. Findings

How has the subject of biking evolved over time in the urban development plans for Vienna from 2005 and 2014?

Understanding how biking has developed through time in specific regions gives useful insights into the priority and progression of cycling efforts. This sub-question examines the progress of biking in Vienna's urban development plans from 2005 and 2014, the STEP 05 and the STEP 25. As it was explained above in chapter 5 those documents are officially published by the city of Vienna after broad consultation of external experts and try to set out big trends, goals and policies for the next ten years from their respective year of publishing. The two documents deal with all matters concerning urban development, traffic and mobility are an important part thereof.

The aim of the first part of this chapter is to compare the frequency of keywords with a link to biking in STEP 05 and STEP 25. This research intends to emphasize the overlaps, differences, and possible implications by evaluating the distribution patterns of key urban features mentioned in the plans in connection to biking and bike infrastructure. I established the word list by using the methodology described above in chapter 5. The groupings start with the basic term “bicycle” in its different synonyms and the corresponding verb “to bike”. The next category will be “traffic” as this is the topic closely linked to the modal split. The third group is the word “biker” as the personification of the topic. Bike paths and bike parking will then be investigated as the two topics that concern the necessary infrastructure. I then added a list with all usages of the English word bike. After that for the STEP documents only two words remain that I grouped under “others”.

Frequency analysis

Bike/biking		
Word	**Step 05**	**Step 25**
Rad	7	5
rad	0	2
Räder	0	1
Fahrrad	2	4
fahrrad	0	1
Alltagsradeln	0	1
Radfah	1	0
Radfahren	5	4
radfahren	0	1
	15	**19**

Table 6.1:Usage of specific words in context: Bike/biking
Source: Own calculation

In general, there are more words mentioning bikes and biking in STEP 25 than in STEP 05, however the difference is only four words. The word biking is mentioned five times in both urban development plans. However, in STEP 25 the word *Alltagsradeln* is used as well, which basically translates as everyday biking. This might hint that in contrast to the urban development plan from 2005 in 2014 biking was more recognized as a daily mode of transport. On top of that, the word “bike” in its different synonyms and including singular and plural are mentioned more often in the urban development plan from 2014 than in the one from 2005 (13 vs. 9).

traffic		
Word	**Step 05**	**Step 25**
RADVERKEHR	0	1
Radverkehr	1	5
radverkehr	0	2
Radverkehran	1	0
Radverkehrs	2	3
Radverkehrserhe	1	0
	5	**11**

Table 6.2:Usage of specific words in context: traffic
Source: Own calculation

Bicycle traffic definitely is given more attention in STEP 25 than in STEP 05. Words concerning bicycle traffic come up more than twice as much in STEP 25.

biker		
Word	**Step 05**	**Step 25**
Radfahrer	4	1
Radfahrerinnen	0	1
RadfahrerInnen	2	0
Radler	1	0
	7	**2**

Table 6.3:Usage of specific words in context: biker
Source: Own calculation

Thus far we have seen words for bike, biking, and bicycle traffic are more frequent in the STEP 25 documents. However, when looking at how often cyclists are directly mentioned one can see that this is more the case in the earlier document. In the STEP 25 document cyclist come up twice, however, it is in the same sentence one time in the male and one time in the female version. Meaning in the document from 2014 cyclists are only addressed once in a gender inclusive way.

One reason for talking less about cyclists directly could be that the authors tried to steer clear of pitting different road users against each other in STEP 25. Following Caimotto, depersonalising biking from the person could be interpreted as an attempt to avoid the "us vs. them" narrative.[75] This will become clearer in the next chapters and especially in the analysis of the town council meetings. Further, out of the seven times bikers are mentioned in the STEP 05 document only two times the gender-inclusive form *RadfahrerInnen* is used. This aligns with the findings in previous research that women seldom appear as bikers in media portrayals of bikers.[76] Nevertheless, at this point, it should be noted that the importance of gender-inclusive language in official documents has only grown in the last few years.

[75] Caimotto, 'London Mayor's Transport Strategy', 81.
[76] Sustrans' Research & Monitoring Unit, 'Active Travel in the Media: Exploring Representations of Walking and Cycling in UK and Scottish Online News', 10.

Bike paths

Word	Step 05	Step 25
Radnetzes	0	1
Radroute	1	0
Radspuren	0	1
Radstreifen	0	1
Radwe	1	0
Radweg	1	1
Radwege	6	0
Radwegenetz	1	0
Radwegenetzes	2	0
radwegorientierter	0	1
Radwegverbin	1	0
	13	**5**

Table 6.4:Usage of specific words in context: Bike paths
Source: Own calculation

The issue of bike paths seems to be more prominent in the urban development plan from 2005 than in the one from 2014. A quick scan of the STEP 05 document showed that bike paths are mostly mentioned in connection to leisure activities and recreational time in nature. The content analysis below will go into further detail. Even though STEP 25 mentions bike paths only 5 times it should be noted that the words *Radspuren* and *Radstreifen* in STEP 25 refer to bike lanes on the street. This indicates that in the more recent period, space formerly allocated to cars is now transferred to bikes.

Parking

Word	Step 05	Step 25
Radabstell	0	1
Radabstellanlagen	0	2
Radstander	1	0
Fahrradabstellplatze	1	0
	2	**3**

Table 6.5:Usage of specific words in context: Parking
Source: Own calculation

Regarding parking one can see that there is no big difference in frequency of occurrence between the two urban development plans. However, different synonyms are used to refer to parking options for bikes. In the earlier document cycle racks and bicycle parking spaces are mentioned. While the 2014 document uses the word *Radabstellanlagen* which can be

translated to bike storage facility ie. referring to a parking facility for bikes that takes up more space than just a bike stand. Again, one could argue that this shows that the authors of STEP 25 wanted to allocate more space to bicycle infrastructure in the future than they intended in previous plans.

	bike	
Word	**Step 05**	**Step 25**
Mountainbikestrecken	1	0
Bike	0	5
bike	0	1
Bikes	0	1
Leih	0	1

Table 6.6:Usage of specific words in context: bike
Source: Own calculation

Since Vienna´s bike rental platform is called "Citybikes" I also searched for the word *bike*. The rental bike system for Vienna was in the works since 2002 and was properly established in 2003.[77] Only from 2007 onwards were the bikes accessible all year long, up until that year the bikes were not in use in winter.[78] Although the start was a bit slow, the service is now an integral part of the city's infrastructure. By autumn 2022 the total number of bikes amounted to 3000 and the stations can be found in all districts.[79] So even though the Citybike scheme already existed in 2005 neither Citybike nor bike-sharing as a concept were mentioned in STEP05. In contrast, the keyword *bike* is mentioned in STEP25 in connection to the Citybike service, bike-sharing infrastructure and e-bikes. Moreover, the German word for bike sharing is *Leihrad* and this is only mentioned in STEP25 and not in STEP05. The only time *bike* comes up in STEP05 is in the word *Mountainbikestrecken* which means Mountain bike trails. So, while bike sharing was given no attention in 2005, we see again the emphasis on sports activities like mountain biking in the earlier document.

[77] Stadt Wien, 'Viennabike'; Stadt Wien, 'Citybike'.
[78] Brandt-Di Maio, 'Jubiläumsjahr 2018: Citybike Wien Feiert 15-Jähriges Bestehen'.
[79] wien.gv.at, '3.000 WienMobil-Räder Für Wiener*innen'.

other		
Word	**Step 05**	**Step 25**
Fahrradangebote	0	1
Fahrradwerkstätte	1	0

Table 6.7:words without significant category
Source: Own calculation

Lastly, two words I could not sort into one of the above-mentioned categories were bicycle offers (Fahrradangebote) and bicycle repair shop (Fahrradwerkstätte). The first one is once mentioned in the STEP 25 document, the second one once in the STEP 05 document. Finally, in contrast to the coalition agreements and the city council it should be noted that neither STEP 05 nor STEP 25 mention cargo bikes.

This chapter attempted to reveal changes and developments in Vienna's urban development plans for biking by using frequency analysis techniques and studying important factors connected to bike infrastructure and policy. The frequency distribution of features such as bike paths, bike-sharing services, bicycle safety measures, and public education efforts gave quantitative insights into the evolution of cycling as a crucial part of Vienna's urban transportation system.

Content analysis

		1 Step05.pdf 34	2 STEP25.pdf 32	Summe
biking as fitness&leisure time activity	14	13	1	14
sustainabel mobility	13	3	10	13
less (individual) car-centric space devision/ planning	11		11	11
expand bike paths	11	5	6	11
improve planning	5	5		5
bike sharing	5		5	5
Bike parking	5	2	3	5
improve active mobility	4	4		4
from sport to daily mobility	4	1	3	4
increase in bikers	3	2	1	3
biking numbers have improved	2		2	2
biking across city borders	2		2	2
"Stadt der kurzen Wege"	1		1	1
saftey	1		1	1
E-bikes	1		1	1
service stations	1	1		1
publicity for biking	1	1		1
Summe		37	47	84

Table 6.8:Distribution of codes in STEP 05 and STEP 25
Source: Own calculation

To compare the difference between how the subject of biking evolved between STEP 05 and STEP 25, in a next step I set out to do a content analysis. In table 6.8 above one can see how often different codes come up in each document. There is a clear difference between the two STEP documents. STEP 05 focuses more on biking as a leisure time and sporting activity while in STEP 25 the predominant themes are sustainable mobility and moving away from car-centric planning. In the following paragraphs, I will go into more detail about how these themes are portrayed in STEP 05 and STEP 25.

What sticks out in the depiction of biking in the urban development plan from 2005 is that the authors highlight that even though the share of biking in the modal split has been low (between 3 and 4.5%), traffic statistics demonstrate that the bicycle has evolved from a primarily recreational and sports tool to a mode of transportation for daily life. Further, it is mentioned in STEP 05 that to increase the share of biking in the city up to 8% the bike path

network and bike parking will be improved.[80] However what stands out after a closer look at the text is that this is only mentioned once and for the most part of the document biking and biking infrastructure are mentioned in connection to health and leisure activities in nature.

> "Urban planning can also make important contributions to health prevention (...) by creating a movement-friendly environment such as attractive footpaths and cycle paths."[81]
>
> "The large green areas of the city (...) offer opportunities for leisure activities in nature (e.g. walking, hiking, water sports, cycling, etc.)."[82]

This coincides with research results which showed that riding a bike as a recreational, sporting activity is more prevalent in nations with low cycling rates.[83] Of course, creating space for leisure activities and providing greenspaces is also mentioned in STEP 25. However, the cooccurrence of biking and green spaces is not as dominant as in STEP 05. In STEP 25 greenspace is seen to have several functions next to being an area where people can do sports. It is also needed for orientation, has an ecological function, and is needed for natural preservation. [84]

In contrast to the dominant framing of biking in STEP 05 as a leisure time activity, sustainable mobility comes up more often when biking is referenced in STEP 25.

> "The City of Vienna is committed to giving priority to public transport, pedestrians, and cycling in the common environmental network."[85]

Further, in STEP25 the authors pushed the concept of "Alltagsradeln" (translates as daily biking) and multimodal transport.[86] At several points in the document, it is mentioned that

[80] Mittringer and Magistrat der Stadt Wien, *STEP 05 - Stadtentwicklung Wien 2005*, 72.
[81] Mittringer and Magistrat der Stadt Wien, 82.
[82] Mittringer and Magistrat der Stadt Wien, 136.
[83] Huwer, 'Let's Bike - The 10 Point Pedalling Action Programme to Support Cycling'.
[84] Stadtentwicklung Wien Magistratsabteilung 18 – Stadtentwicklung und Stadtplanung, *STEP 25 Stadtentwicklungsplan Wien*, 136.
[85] Stadtentwicklung Wien Magistratsabteilung 18 – Stadtentwicklung und Stadtplanung, 10.
[86] Stadtentwicklung Wien Magistratsabteilung 18 – Stadtentwicklung und Stadtplanung, 102.

people can decide between using cars or bikes and further that infrastructure should incentivize using different modes of transport (eg. bike and train).[87]

> "Making interchanges between walking, (rental) cycling, electric mobility, car-sharing mobility, (electric) taxis and public transport more attractive is a decisive prerequisite for increasing the share of environmental mobility in the total number of journeys in the city."[88]

> "a person has both a bicycle and a car at his or her disposal for commuting to work"[89]

The authors highlight that sustainable mobility in the city should be seen as a system that integrates several modes of transport together and that the intersections between different means of transport should be optimized so people can easily transfer between one and the other, plus provide complementary urban mobility services (e.g. bike-sharing and car-sharing systems, etc.).[90]

As mentioned previously, one main obstacle the authors of STEP 25 identified is the population growth in Vienna. An increase in population obviously also increases the pressure on and demand for traffic infrastructure in the city. It is clearly stated that if the city does not act, public transport and the city´s bike infrastructures will be overburdened.[91] This shows in contrast to STEP 05 bike infrastructure is taken more seriously as an integral part of the city's infrastructure – especially since sustainable transport has become a more pressing issue.

Further, one topic that is mentioned in STEP 25 and especially in connection to sustainable mobility is bike-sharing possibilities. As already mentioned in the frequency analysis above, bike-sharing facilities are not mentioned in STEP 05 even though the Citybike scheme already existed. In contrast, in STEP25 it is noted that "the Citybike system will be further developed through new locations, improved accessibility, new bikes and an expansion into

[87] Stadtentwicklung Wien Magistratsabteilung 18 – Stadtentwicklung und Stadtplanung, 103;138.
[88] Stadtentwicklung Wien Magistratsabteilung 18 – Stadtentwicklung und Stadtplanung, 103.
[89] Stadtentwicklung Wien Magistratsabteilung 18 – Stadtentwicklung und Stadtplanung, 138.
[90] Stadtentwicklung Wien Magistratsabteilung 18 – Stadtentwicklung und Stadtplanung, 108.
[91] Stadtentwicklung Wien Magistratsabteilung 18 – Stadtentwicklung und Stadtplanung, 103.

new districts."[92] In summary, these results show that bike sharing is seen as a vital part of pushing sustainable mobility.

In the urban development plan from 2014, the authors laid out the vision of the Vienna of 2025 as a city where 80% of distances are done by sustainable transport modes ("Umweltverbund"), however in contrast to the STEP 05 it was left unclear how much of the "Umweltverbund" the authors expected to be covered by bike. The increase and optimization of public transport were still given the main focus.[93] In case new streets need to be built they should be designed "stadtverträglich" (city compatible). "City compatible" is defined in the text as "with sufficient space for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport and an attractive design for a high quality of stay."[94] Further, by promoting environmentally friendly traffic options (in STEP 25 this refers to public transport, walking, and biking) the city wants to facilitate the "independence from motorised private transport".[95]

Already in the 1960s the Danish architect Jan Gehl advocated the idea that urban planning may significantly improve the standard living for city inhabitants by enticing them to spend time outside and by facilitating outdoor social interaction. The decisive factor for encouraging life on the streets is the physical environment.[96] Gehl observed that similarly to how car traffic tends to develop in tandem with the construction of new streets, that where more people-centred physical structures exist, outdoor activities are likely to increase in scale.[97] Horton further writes that in comparison to the car which is a "'privatised' capsule occupying 'public' space" the bike is more public since a biker is visible and interactions are more easily possible.[98] It seems as if this line of thinking and planning was adopted to some degree in the writing of STEP 25. The theme of creating more public space for people to hang out on the streets came up at several points in STEP 25. For example, it is mentioned that by building parking houses, space that is normally taken by cars could open up for more

[92] Stadtentwicklung Wien Magistratsabteilung 18 – Stadtentwicklung und Stadtplanung, 110.
[93] Stadtentwicklung Wien Magistratsabteilung 18 – Stadtentwicklung und Stadtplanung, 106.
[94] Stadtentwicklung Wien Magistratsabteilung 18 – Stadtentwicklung und Stadtplanung, 106.
[95] Stadtentwicklung Wien Magistratsabteilung 18 – Stadtentwicklung und Stadtplanung, 4.
[96] Gehl, '"Three Types of Outdoor Activities," "Life Between Buildings," and "Outdoor Activities and the Quality of Outdoor Space"', 609.
[97] Gehl, 617.
[98] Horton, 'Environmentalism and the Bicycle', 48.

public space where people can walk and bike.[99] While this particular part in the text still tries to incorporate cars and proposes a solution on where cars can park there are also parts in STEP 25 where the authors lay out plans to actually repurpose streets and car parking spaces for pedestrians and bikers. [100]

One interesting point that only comes up in STEP 05 is the topic of awareness rising. The document mentions that a change in traffic behaviour is only possible if citizens, administration, and politicians know more about the goal to shift from individual motorized traffic to more environmentally friendly options. To foster more acceptance of this endeavour, it is stated in STEP 05 that the city will implement among other things "awareness-raising measures for walking and biking".[101]

The concept of a "city of short distances" („Stadt der kurzen Wege") only comes up in STEP 25. It is a key concept of how Vienna should develop in the future. It is interesting that this was already a subject of debate in 2014, even though the idea of the "15-minute city" has globally only seen an increased interest after the Covid-19 pandemic.[102] Additionally, Wiersma et al. analysed how spatial circumstances correspond with real mobility behaviour and they concluded that automobile use was higher than actual car dependency. Some of their findings can be applied to the general discussion on how much spatial circumstances in a city relate to daily mobility practice. Travel times to locations of everyday conveniences, as well as the level of urbanization and job locations close to public transport stations, are prerequisites for car dependency. [103] Lastly, the authors note that the distances from an individual´s home to the nearest public transport stop and the distance from a station to offices are decisive in the decision-making process if one takes the car or opts for a combination of biking or walking and public transport.[104] In this regard, the authors stress that for future urban planning distances should be kept in mind, and upscaling[105] should be

[99] Stadtentwicklung Wien Magistratsabteilung 18 – Stadtentwicklung und Stadtplanung, *STEP 25 Stadtentwicklungsplan Wien*, 110.
[100] Stadtentwicklung Wien Magistratsabteilung 18 – Stadtentwicklung und Stadtplanung, 110.
[101] Mittringer and Magistrat der Stadt Wien, *STEP 05 - Stadtentwicklung Wien 2005*, 66.
[102] Allam et al., 'The 15-Minute City Offers a New Framework for Sustainability, Liveability, and Health'.
[103] Wiersma, Bertolini, and Harms, 'Spatial Conditions for Car Dependency in Mid-Sized European City Regions'.
[104] Wiersma, Bertolini, and Harms.
[105]Examples of upscaling are the clustering of big convenient stores on the outskirts of residential areas or the trend to bigger schools but in fewer locations.

avoided. The highlighted efforts to create a city of short distances in STEP 25 can be seen as an exact attempt to avoid upscaling and decrease car dependency.

To answer the first sub-question, it can be concluded that the content study of the evolution of the issue of cycling between STEP 05 and STEP 25 indicates significant shifts in the focus and conceptualization of biking in urban development plans. STEP 05 portrays cycling largely as a recreational and sports activity, with suggestions for upgrading bike route networks and bike parking. The document emphasizes how bike riding has evolved from a leisure activity to an everyday source of transportation, but in its initiatives, it remains stuck with the idea of the link between bicycles and outdoor recreation. On the other side, STEP 25 tries to make the shift to “everyday biking”, biking as a normal means of transport in everyday life. It emphasizes sustainable transportation more strongly and moves away from planning that is car-centric. The plan promotes the incorporation of multiple forms of transportation, including bicycles, to boost sustainable mobility. Biking is portrayed as a component of an overall network of sustainable mobility. To promote environmentally friendly transportation, the idea of sharing bicycles is presented. In addition, STEP 25 includes proposals for redesigning streets and parking lots to give priority to bicyclists and pedestrians, reflecting a trend toward developing cities that are more people-centred. The necessity of developing public knowledge on the benefits of bike riding and walking is stated in STEP 05, but not in STEP 25. The topic pertaining to the emphasis placed on promotional measures in older documents, which is absent in recent documents, will be revisited in the following chapter which discusses the coalition agreements. Overall, the analysis shows how objectives and considerations have changed in urban design, as bike riding has gone from being a recreational activity to an essential component of multimodal, sustainable transportation networks.

How have the governing parties portrayed issues of urban mobility transformation in regard to biking in their coalition agreements of the past 3 elections?

The documents used in the preceding chapter were products of a collaboration between the city planning department of the city of Vienna and urban development experts. In this chapter, I now turn to three documents that are the outcome of the coalition negotiations after the city council elections. The analysis of the three documents facilitates the examination of how political parties frame topics like urban mobility, how they want to influence change that they consider as desirable, and how their objectives change from each election cycle to the next. The documents can be seen as relevant examples of the discourse about cycling for the years in which they were written in.

The reasons for choosing the coalition agreements as appropriate documents for the analysis are already explained in chapter 5. Already the title of the three agreements each sets a different focus and tone. The 2010 coalition agreement, concluded between the social democratic and the green party, is called “Joint Paths for Vienna” (Gemeinsame Wege für Wien). As this was the first coalition government the city has seen since 1996, the parties put the focus on their joint efforts. The 2015 coalition agreement, again concluded between the social democratic and the green party, is called “One City, Two Million Chances” (Eine Stadt, zwei Millionen Chancen.). The focus on the growth of the population to two million was already discussed in the STEP25 that was issued in 2014, where the authors highlighted that the main challenge for Vienna in the future was how to accommodate the city and its infrastructure for 2 million people. Finally, the 2020 coalition agreement, concluded between the social democratic and the liberal party, is called “The Progress Coalition for Vienna” (Die Fortschrittskoalition für Wien). This title puts the focus on technical and economic progress. In line with the method deployed in the previous chapter, I will first try to draw conclusions from a frequency analysis and then turn to a content analysis.

Frequency analysis

As outlined above in chapter 5, the frequency analysis employed here is an attempt to start with an analysis that uses objective criteria rather than reading the text and directly analysing the content. The groupings start with the same categories as in the chapter on the two STEP documents (Bike, traffic, bikers, bike paths, parking). Further, I have grouped some

words around regulatory matters and some around bike theft. Moreover, I added the topic of cargo bikes in a separate subject. Lastly, I added two tables mostly filled with the output from the search for the English term “bike”. The first one deals with the topic of bike-sharing and the second one collects all separate usages of the English term “bike”.

Bikes/Biking

Word	Coalition agreement 2010	Coalition agreement 2015	Coalition agreement 2020
Fahrrad	0	0	1
Fahrräder	0	0	1
Fahrrädern	0	3	0
fahrrädern	0	0	1
Rad	6	6	6
räder	0	0	1
Rädern	0	0	1
Radfahren	2	0	0
	8	9	11

Table 6.9: Usage of specific words in context: Bikes/Biking
Source: Own calculation

Turning now to the analysis, apart from the verb biking (“radfahren”), the words in the list above are all synonyms for the word “bicycle”, both in singular and plural.

Regarding the output of table 6.9, I only looked at the total. As can be seen from the table above there has been a slight but steady increase in the use of those words. Starting with 8 counts in 2010 (whereof two were the verb “to bike”) over 9 counts in 2015 to 11 counts in 2020. To put those numbers into perspective I compared this to other terms used in the coalition agreements that cover completely different topics than biking. Using the same methodology, meaning only looking at the basic term and synonyms, and leaving out of consideration word combinations that have another meaning, I looked at the term “health” and “theatre”, two fields where the city has competences as it has in traffic. The term “health” appeared 9 times in the coalition agreement of 2010, 11 times in 2015 and 24 times in 2020 (see figure 6.1). The increase in 2020 is presumably due to references to health in connection to the COVID-19 pandemic. The term “theatre” appeared three times in 2010, two times in 2015 and six times in 2020. One could draw from this comparison that the focus on bicycles has been comparatively high in all three agreements as it is referred to more often than to theatre and at comparable level as to health.

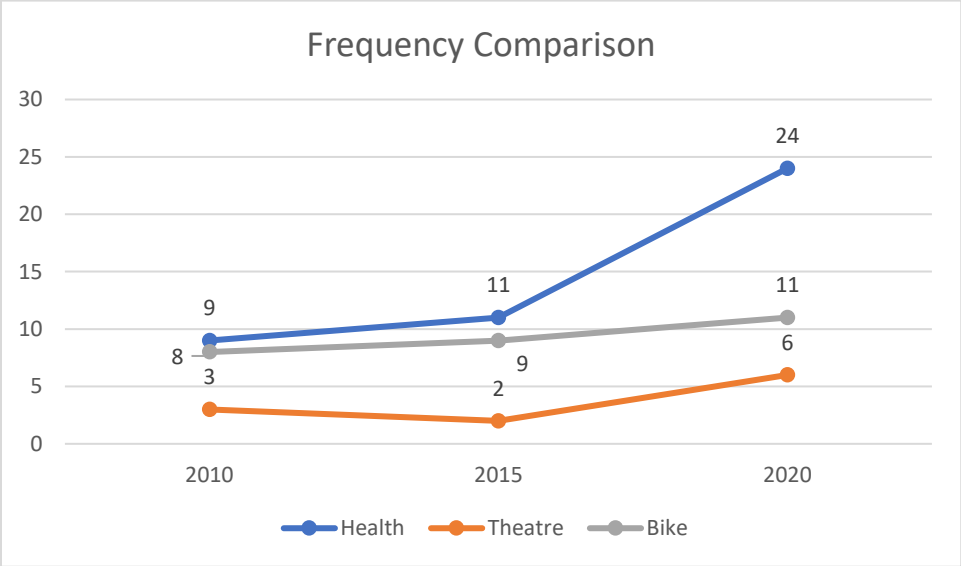

Figure 6.1:Frequency Comparison
Source: own calculation

	Traffic		
Word	**Coalition agreement 2010**	**Coalition agreement 2015**	**Coalition agreement 2020**
Radver	0	1	0
Radverkehr	4	4	6
Radverkehrs	2	1	0
Radverkehrsanteil	2	1	1
radverkehrsfördernde	1	0	0
Radverkehrsplanung	1	0	0
	10	**7**	**7**

Table 6.10:Usage of specific words in context: Traffic
Source: Own calculation

The highest number of words regarding bike traffic is found in the coalition agreement from 2010 and interestingly the word “bicycle traffic planning” and “cycling traffic promotion” only appear there. The other two agreements both include 7 words related to cycling traffic. The fact that “cycle traffic promotion” is only addressed in the 2010 agreement and not anymore in the later agreements might be based on a realization by the political parties that the share of biking in the modal split cannot be increased by just promoting the positive effects of biking. This would be in line with research carried out by Oosterhuis which comes

to the result looking at historic numbers that campaigns to promote biking have generally failed to increase the share of biking in the modal split. [106]

Bikers			
Word	**Coalition agreement 2010**	**Coalition agreement 2015**	**Coalition agreement 2020**
Radfahrer_innen	0	0	5
RadlerInnen	1	0	0
	1	0	5

Table 6.11:Usage of specific words in context: Bikers
Source: Own calculation

Turning now to the topic of the (de-)personification. The matter was previously touched upon in the chapter above when discussing STEP 05 and STEP 25 and will be elaborated in more detail here. As Caimotto points out there is often a strong "us vs. them" narrative in discussions about cycling. "Cyclists" are often marked in a negative way, and this leads to discrimination and according to several surveys that Caimotto refers to also to aggression against cyclists. This aggression is often not condemned and ultimately leads to a "dehuminazation" of cyclists.[107] Being aware of this background she analysed how the 2018 Mayor's Transport Strategy and the Cycling Action Plan for London dealt with this "us vs. them" topic. She concluded that they "avoid employing road users categories (pedestrians, cyclists, drivers) thus avoiding the pitfalls of the "us vs. them" narrative".[108] In the coalition agreement of 2010 with only one occurrence of the word "RadlerInnen" the same approach can be seen. The coalition agreement of 2015 entirely follows the approach described by Caimotto for the 2018 Mayor's Transport Strategy. Not a single time the term "cyclist" is used. Where the 2018 Mayor's Transport Strategy according to the analysis of Caimotto use "the inclusive notion of people or Londoners", the coalition agreement of 2015 similarly refers to "WienerInnen" and then explaining the means of transport they use (walking, by bike or public transport).[109]

[106] Oosterhuis, 'Entrenched Habit or Fringe Mode: Comparing National Bicycle Policies, Cultures and Histories.', 95.
[107] Caimotto, 'Discourse Practices and Power', 2020, 25.
[108] Caimotto, 81.
[109] Caimotto, 'London Mayor's Transport Strategy', 82; Häupl and Vassilakou, 'Eine Stadt, Zwei Millionen Chancen. Das Rot-Grüne Regierungsübereinkommen Für Ein Soziales, Weltoffenes Und Lebenswertes Wien', 9.

In the 2020 coalition agreement the approach is different, and “cyclists” appears 5 times. At one occurrence the authors write that they want to solve conflicts between cyclists and pedestrians while they ignore that picturing the two as opposing groups already reinforces perceived conflict situations. [110] One reason for this change in approach might be the change in the government. While the first two coalition agreements were concluded by the social democratic party with the green party, the last coalition agreement was established with the liberal party. The green party has always been seen as the party favouring cycling the most. For instance, the NGO Radlobby ranked the program of political parties standing for election in the national election 2019 and the green party was classified as facilitating the needs of bikers the most.[111] This might be the reason why wording of the coalition agreements in 2010 and 2015 was chosen more carefully than in 2020.

Lastly, when looking at the references to “cyclists” in the coalition agreement of 2020 it can be noted that it uses “Radfahrer_innen” to include both female and male cyclists. The document in general uses gender-inclusive language, but the topic is of specific concern when talking about bikers. As Caimotto points out, "white, middle or upper-class men (…) constitute the main percentage of the people identified and reified as “cyclists””.[112] By explicitly using a term (Radfahrer_innen) that includes female cyclists the authors of the coalition agreement of 2020 at least avoided this stereotype.

[110] Stadt Wien, ‘Die Fortschritts Koalition Für Wien’, 160.
[111] Verein Radlobby Österreich, ‘Koalition Mit Rad 2019? Wahlbarometer: DIE GRÜNEN’.
[112] Caimotto, ‘Discourse Practices and Power’, 2020, 21.

Bike paths/Routes			
Word	**Coalition agreement 2010**	**Coalition agreement 2015**	**Coalition agreement 2020**
Fahrradstraßen	0	1	3
Fahrradwege	0	0	1
Fahrradwegenetz	0	0	1
Radewegnetze(s)	1	1	1
Radfahrquerungen	0	0	1
Radinfrastruktur	0	2	1
Radlangstrecken	0	1	0
Radstreifen	0	0	1
Radverkehrskorridore	1	0	0
Radverkehrsnetz	0	0	1
Radweg	1	0	0
Radwege	0	0	3
Radwegen	0	0	1
Radausbaupro-gramm	0	0	1
Radwegeausbau-programm	0	0	1
	3	**5**	**16**

Table 6.12: Usage of specific words in context: Bike paths/Routes
Source: Own calculation

Table 6.12 above shows clearly how the focus on and importance of road infrastructure for bicycles increased over the years, with 3 references in the 2010 coalition agreement, 5 in 2015 and 16 in 2020. All three coalition agreements referred once to “Radwegenetz”, the network of bicycle paths. In the 2010 coalition agreement, besides this one reference to the network of bicycle paths, there is only one more reference to “Radweg” (bike path) in general and one to the specific installation of a “Radwegkorridor”, which is something like a bicycle highway. This leaves the number of references to this topic in 2010 at only three. In the coalition agreement of 2015, the total number of references goes up to 5. The topic of bicycle highways (here called “Radlandstrecken”) is also included here. Besides two more usages of the general term bicycle infrastructure, the reference to “Fahrradstraßen” (bicycle roads) appears here for first time. This term reappears three times in the agreement of 2020. Those bicycle roads are a new kind of bicycle infrastructure that has been introduced in Austria by an amendment to the code for road traffic (Straßenverkehrsordnung) in

2013.[113] The code for road traffic is in the competence of the federal government. Therefore, the law introducing bicycle roads on the federal level was a prerequisite to implementing such a solution on a city level.[114] Thus, it is logical that only after the implementation of the law, the term can be found in the coalition agreement.

According to the Austrian law, a bicycle road is a road where bikers can ride beside each other in the same direction and the general speed limit is set at 30 km/h.[115]
The law follows the German example, where a similar regulation had already been introduced in 1992. According to Matthew Bruno the concept of the bicycle street was initially even "invented" in Germany where the city of Bremen developed the idea in the early 1980's as a cost-efficient way to raise the connectivity in the city's bicycle infrastructure.[116] When looking into the coalition agreement of 2020, it is exactly that reasoning that is behind the push for bicycle streets. Bicycle streets are seen as "cheap and quick to implement" and can be connected to "a complete bicycle path network".[117]
Contrary to the intentions set out in the coalition agreement the number of bicycle streets that have been implemented in the meantime remain quite limited. Out of the total of 1.721 km of bicycle paths in Vienna only 9,6 km are of bicycle streets.[118] Besides the new and stronger focus on bicycle roads, there is an increased focus on the topic of bicycle infrastructure in the coalition agreement 2020.

[113] Straßenverkehrsordnung 1960 (25. StVO-Novelle), 6.
[114] Huber, *Die Gemeinde und ihre straßenpolizeilichen Aufgaben Leitfaden zur optimalen Beschilderung ; Gefahren bei der Baustellenabsicherung ; Haftung des Straßenerhalters ; zahlreiche Musterverordnungen*.
[115] Straßenverkehrsordnung 1960 (25. StVO-Novelle), 6.
[116] Bruno, 'The Challenge of the Bicycle Street', 4.
[117] Stadt Wien, 'Die Fortschritts Koalition Für Wien', 162.
[118] Stadt Wien, 'Zahlen Und Fakten Zum Wiener Radverkehrsnetz'.

Parking

Word	Coalition agreement 2010	Coalition agreement 2015	Coalition agreement 2020
Fahrradabstell-möglichkeiten	0	0	1
Fahrradgaragen	0	0	2
Radabstell	1	0	0
Radabstellanlagen	1	1	1
Radboxen	0	1	0
Radgaragen	1	0	0
Radständer	0	0	1
	3	**2**	**5**

Table 6.13:Usage of specific words in context: Parking
Source: Own calculation

As far as parking possibilities for bikes is concerned (table 6.13), the first thing to note here is that the topic has been quite stable over the years, while nevertheless an increase can be seen in the 2020 coalition agreement. Words covering the topic come up five times in 2020. Whereas it is only mentioned two times overall in 2015 and three times in 2010. The increase of references to that topic in 2020 are entirely due to the stronger focus on parking garages and similar more advanced installations. Furthermore, the term "Fahrradabstellmöglichkeiten" (bicycle parking possibilities) is used in combination with the adjectives "roofed" and "monitored" (überdacht und überwacht).[119] This can be seen as a recognition of the need to treat bicycle infrastructure more equally in comparison to the infrastructure provided for cars. The number of parking facilities for bikes in Vienna increased from 27.249 in 2010 to 59.306 in 2023.[120]

[119] Stadt Wien, 'Die Fortschritts Koalition Für Wien', 158.
[120] Stadt Wien, 'Zahlen Und Fakten Zum Wiener Radverkehrsnetz'.

Regulatory Matters

Word	Coalition agreement 2010	Coalition agreement 2015	Coalition agreement 2020
Radfahrausweis	0	0	1
Radfahrkompetenz	0	0	1
Radführerschein	1	0	0
Radpolitik	1	0	0
Radwegebenützungspflicht	1	0	0
Fahrradkultur	1	0	0
	4	**0**	**2**

Table 6.14:Usage of specific words in context: Regulatory Matters
Source: Own calculation

In this table (table 6.14) I have gathered words that are linked to regulatory measures in connection with biking. We can see that those topics played a role in the 2010 and in the 2020 agreement, while the 2015 agreement did not touch those subjects at all. Looking at the list of words three topics become apparent. One is the bicycle license for children. In 2010 the text refers to the aim to increase traffic awareness of children. This may be interpreted as that in 2010 a more car-centric perception still existed where children must follow general traffic rules instead of creating a safer environment for children on bikes. On the other hand, the 2020 coalition aims to increase the number of children that can cycle via education programs. This aligns with literature on the effects of bicycle education. Oosterhuis claims that bicycle education for children is important for two main reasons. Firstly, it raises the number of people who can bike in the future. Secondly, the perception of biking as something dangerous decreases.[121]

The second topic is the obligation to use bike paths on streets where they exist. This obligation is a rule laid down in the federal law regulating road traffic.[122] The city of Vienna did not have any competencies to change that federal law and therefore it is also logical that the coalition agreement 2010 limited itself to the statement: “Vienna demands the abolishment of the obligation to use bike paths in the Straßenverkehrsordnung (StVO)”.[123] Apparently, the coalition was successful in their demand, because in 2013 the StVO was

[121] Oosterhuis, ‘Entrenched Habit or Fringe Mode: Comparing National Bicycle Policies, Cultures and Histories.’, 93.
[122] Straßenverkehrsordnung 1960 (25. StVO-Novelle).
[123] Häupl and Vassilakou, ‘Gemeinsame Wege Für Wien. Das Rot-Grüne Regierungsübereinkommen’, 62.

amended. The general obligation to use bike paths remained in place, but cities were given the possibility to define certain bike paths as a "cycle path without obligation to use" (Radweg ohne Benützungspflicht). [124] Some bike paths in Vienna have been converted in the meantime. The first one was introduced only one month after the change in the law in May 2013.[125] The topic of changing more bike paths to ones without obligation to use does not reappear in the following coalition agreements.

Thirdly, the remaining words are only loosely linked to regulatory matters. They concern the two notions of policy and culture. Both are included in the 2010 coalition agreement and can be found in the same paragraph. Reading the text, we can see the link to regulatory matters as it speaks about establishing a "culture" to involve "bikers" in the development of the bike policy.[126]

bike theft

Word	Coalition agreement 2010	Coalition agreement 2015	Coalition agreement 2020
Fahrraddiebstahl	1	0	0
Fahrradhandel	1	0	0
Fahrradkodie(rung, Indentifikations-nummer)	1	0	0
	3	**0**	**0**

Table 6.15:Usage of specific words in context: bike theft
Source: Own calculation

The three words listed here (table 6.15) are all linked to the topic of bike theft and protection against it. This topic is only included in the 2010 coalition agreement. Measures against bike theft are seen as a priority and the marking of new bikes in cooperation with bike shops (that is where "Fahrradkodierung" and "Fahrradhandel" are connected to the topic) is seen as an important measure. In the later agreements, no references at all are made to bike theft and measures to prevent or reduce it. It seems that in the political discourse of more recent years, this topic has less importance. It may also be a choice of the

[124] Straßenverkehrsordnung 1960 (25. StVO-Novelle).
[125] Matzenberger, 'Operngasse: Auf Erstem Wiener Radweg Fällt Die Benutzungspflicht'.
[126] Häupl and Vassilakou, 'Gemeinsame Wege Für Wien. Das Rot-Grüne Regierungsübereinkommen', 62.

political parties not to include a topic in their official documents with such a negative connotation.

Cargo bikes

Word	Coalition agreement 2010	Coalition agreement 2015	Coalition agreement 2020
Lastenfahrrädern	0	1	0
Lastenräder	0	0	1
Lasten	0	0	4 (2 Reference to cargo bikes)
	0	**1**	**3**

Table 6.16:Usage of specific words in context: Cargo bikes
Source: Own calculation

Cargo bikes were not mentioned in the coalition agreement from 2010 (see in table 6.16). Apparently, at that time this topic was not part of the political discourse, at least not frequent enough to be included in the coalition agreement. The term appears for the first time in the 2015 agreement, however only once. In 2020 cargo bikes seem to have won recognition and are mentioned three times. This is in line with the development that was identified in the STEP05 and STEP25 documents where biking moved away from a leisure activity to a daily activity also related to work purposes.

bike sharing

Word	Coalition agreement 2010	Coalition agreement 2015	Coalition agreement 2020
Bikesharing	0	0	2
Citybike	1	2	3
Citybikes	0	0	2
Leihfahrrad	0	0	1
	1	**2**	**8**

Table 6.17:Usage of specific words in context: bike sharing
Source: Own calculation

In order to check how often the topic of bike sharing (see table 6.17) comes up I looked for bike sharing, Leihfahrrad, and citybike (which is the name of the city's own bike-sharing platform). The reference to the Citybike system is a common theme throughout all three

coalition agreements with one reference in 2010, two references in 2015 and five in 2020. The Citybike system seems to have been accepted by the parties and over the years obtained more attention. Notable in the last coalition agreement of 2020 the concept of bike sharing is used additionally three more times in a more general way. This may be because in the last years bike sharing systems have been introduced also by other providers than the city itself.[127] In total the increase in references to bike sharing is very remarkable.

	Bikes		
Word	**Coalition agreement 2010**	**Coalition agreement 2015**	**Coalition agreement 2020**
Bike	8	0	1
Bikes	2	0	0
	10	**0**	**0**

Table 6.18:Usage of specific words in context: bikes
Source: Own calculation

Lastly, I checked if the word "bike" in English came up in the coalition agreements on its own without reference to the Vienna Citybike system (see table 6.18). This was only the case for the coalition agreements in 2010 and 2020. In the 2010 coalition agreement, we see as many as 10 uses of the English word bike. This can be partly explained by the fact that 5 times it refers to projects called "bike city" or "bike&swim city". Those projects were apparently current city planning initiatives in 2010. Another explanation is that four times the word e-bike is used. And lastly one of the 10 counts of bikes in the 2010 coalition agreement refers to "Bike&Ride Station". In the 2020 coalition agreement, we see only one such hit. This hit refers to the need for e-bike loading stations. The small number of references to e-bikes in the agreements after 2010 could be interpreted as an indication that the authors of the agreements do not recognise e-bikes as an important transport means in the city. This connects to a market research done by Deloitte that investigated the motives for buying an e-bike (see figure 6.2). Out of the five sampled countries (Germany, Austria, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Belgium) Austrians ranked leisure and sports as the two main motivations for getting an e-bike. All other countries recorded higher percentages of commuting to work as a motivation for buying an e-bike.[128]

[127] 'Fahrrad-Start-up Legt in Wien Los: Zwist Mit Platzhirsch Citybike'.
[128] Deloitte, 'Consumer Sector Briefing: E-Bikes Auf Der Überholspur', 4.

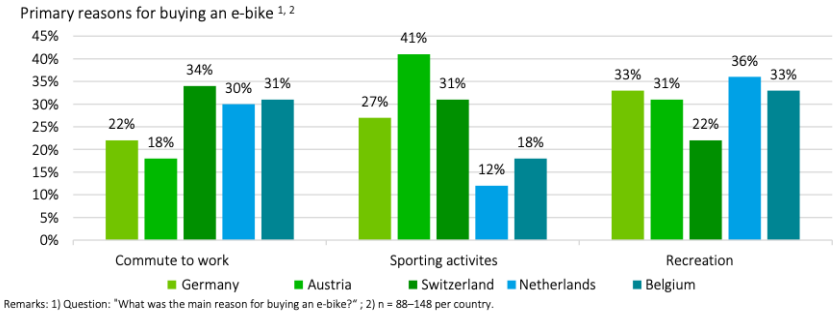

Figure 6.2: Primary reasons for buying an e-bike
Source: Deloitte, 'Consumer Sector Briefing: E-Bikes Auf Der Überholspur', August 2021, 4 https://www2.deloitte.com/at/de/seiten/consumer-business/artikel/consumer-survey-e-bikes.html.

In conclusion, from this frequency analysis, one can see that in the chosen political documents from 2010, 2015, and 2020, the use of words connected to biking increased in frequency over time. Especially in the latest document, the coalition agreement concluded between the social democratic and the liberal party in 2020, an increased focus on biking infrastructure on the one hand side and bike sharing on the other side could be deducted. One other very interesting result from this analysis is that the older agreements tried to refrain from using the word "bikers". This has been discussed above as an attempt to counter the "us vs. them" narrative. In the newer coalition agreement, this aspect has obviously been ignored and the word "bikers" is used again instead of notions like people riding bikes. At this point, it should be pointed out that the coalition agreements also grew in size over time. The coalition agreement from 2010 is just 79 pages long whereas the following one is nearly twice as long with 139 pages and the coalition agreement from 2020 is 206 pages long. This might partly explain some of the increase also in the words referring to biking. However, also an increase in pages that deal with topics around biking shows more attention to the topic. The next part will further look at the context in which these words come up.

Content Analysis

		1 koalitonsabkomen 2010.pdf 19	2 Regierungsübereinkommen 2015.pdf 17	3 Koalitionsabkommen2020.pdf 36	Summe
Expansion of bike paths	14	2	2	10	14
Active mobility + sustainabel mobility	12	4	3	5	12
Bike sharing	11	1	2	8	11
Saftey	10	1		9	10
Bike parking	6	1	2	3	6
Conflict for urban space (car vs. active mobility)	6		2	4	6
E-bikes	6	4		2	6
Financing	5	2		3	5
move way from car-centring planning	5	2	1	2	5
Regulation (One-way streets,Mandatory use of cycle paths)	3	2	1		3
increase active mobility	2		2		2
Infrastructure (servicestation)	2		2		2
Education children	2	1		1	2
Image building	2	2			2
Cycling infrastructure and climate change	2			2	2
Conflict (bikes vs. pedestrians)	1			1	1
Research	1		1		1
increase biking	1	1			1
Smarte Mobilität	1			1	1
Summe		23	18	51	92

Table 6.19:Distribution of codes in Coalition agreements 2010, 2015, 2020
Source: Own calculation

After the quantitative analysis in the previous chapter the following paragraphs explain further the differences and similarities of content of the coalition agreements. In table 6.19 above, I arranged the coded topics by starting with the topic that has the overall highest recurrence to the ones with the lowest. In the following discussion, I will start the analysis with the most prominent topics.

It is no surprise that the tag “expansion of bike paths” has a very high number of recurrences, because this is something that was indicated already in the quantitative research. The analysis of the content shows some interesting developments. In the 2010 coalition agreement, two paragraphs are linked to the topic. The subjects that can be found in those paragraphs are the general goal to continue the “expansion of the Viennese bike path network” and the two special topics of Bike&Ride facilities and bike highways (“Radverkehrskorridore”).[129]

[129] Häupl and Vassilakou, ‘Gemeinsame Wege Für Wien. Das Rot-Grüne Regierungsübereinkommen’, 62.

The notion of "continue" comes back in the 2015 coalition agreement when talking about the goal of extending the bike infrastructure.[130] This can be seen as the wish of the political parties to show that there is no real change in approach and that they consider the efforts in the past as positive. Interesting in that context is also that in the 2015 coalition agreement, they talk about "gap closure in the network of bike paths".[131] The notion of "gaps in the network of bike paths" is also used in the 2020 coalition agreement.[132] This is in line with scientific research by the Technical University of Vienna, where also the need to close gaps in the Viennese bike path infrastructure has been highlighted.[133]

The 2020 coalition agreement takes a slightly different approach to deal with the topic of the need of expansion of the bike paths. First it can be said that the discussion on how to extend the bike infrastructure is given more space in this agreement and more details are added. Secondly, for the first time a goal is laid down for the share of bike paths in relation to the total of space used for traffic in Vienna. This share should be brought to 10%.[134] Also, the commitment to spend Euro 20 million per year on additional bike paths is new. [135] In regard to financing it can be noted that as can be seen in table 6.19 above only the 2010 and the 2020 coalition agreement deal with the topic of financing in connection with biking. Looking into the content, the topics are however quite different. The 2010 coalition agreement only refers to subsidies for e-bikes and lays down the intention to raise them "when the financial circumstances allow" to do so.[136] The 2020 coalition agreement is explicit about financing needs and as stated above, also combines this with clear goals. This could be explained by the change in the participation parties, where the liberal party wants to stress their economic competence.

The 2020 coalition agreement furthermore in contrast to the other agreements explicitly deals with possible conflicts that can arise when building or enlarging bike paths. It is stated

[130] Häupl and Vassilakou, 'Eine Stadt, Zwei Millionen Chancen. Das Rot-Grüne Regierungsübereinkommen Für Ein Soziales, Weltoffenes Und Lebenswertes Wien', 92.
[131] Häupl and Vassilakou, 92.
[132] Stadt Wien, 'Die Fortschritts Koalition Für Wien', 161.
[133] Frey, Laa, and Leth, 'Mobilität in Wien Unter COVID19. Begleituntersuchung Temporäre Begegnungszonen Und Pop-Up Radinfrastruktur'.
[134] Stadt Wien, 'Die Fortschritts Koalition Für Wien', 162.
[135] Stadt Wien, 162.
[136] Häupl and Vassilakou, 'Gemeinsame Wege Für Wien. Das Rot-Grüne Regierungsübereinkommen', 68.

that the space for biking should not be to the detriment of pedestrians.[137] The authors also express their wish to solve existing conflicts between bikers and pedestrians. [138] I have noted this already in the quantitative analysis because here in contrast to the other agreements the “cyclists” are named as a group. While the explicit target of the sentence is to solve a conflict, according to Caimotto, by addressing the groups so explicitly an “us vs. them” feeling could even be reinforced.[139]

The conclusion that the agreements deal differently with possible conflicts between groups is confirmed by an analysis of the sections of the agreements that deal with “conflict for urban space (car vs. active mobility)”. This topic cannot be found in the 2010 coalition agreement. In the 2015 agreement two sections deal with the topic without however explicitly naming a conflict. Here it is said that what is needed is a “fair distribution of the urban space”.[140] This is an interesting approach to address the solution of a conflict without naming the conflict itself. The 2020 coalition agreement again is more explicit about conflicting interests. It also refers to the fair distribution and adds that parking spaces for cars should be replaced by space for pedestrian- and bicycle traffic. Additional it states that still too often infrastructure and public space are thought about and planned with the motorized traffic in mind. [141] Again here, while the intention of all the statements is to support bike traffic, the fact that the 2020 coalition agreement is explicitly naming the conflict and the groups of road users might add to the "us vs. them” narrative.

A last topic where the 2020 coalition agreement puts a new focus in connection with the expansion of bike paths, is safety. The importance of safe bike paths is a prominent theme. Narrow bike lanes that are not separated from other road users is addressed as problematic. On main streets separated bike paths should be built, where possible, and opening one-way streets for two-way bike traffic and bicycle roads are named as alternative solutions to increase safety.[142] This focus on safer bike paths follows the earlier statement in the

[137] Stadt Wien, ‘Die Fortschritts Koalition Für Wien’, 161.
[138] Stadt Wien, 160.
[139] Caimotto, ‘Discourse Practices and Power’, 2020.
[140] Häupl and Vassilakou, ‘Eine Stadt, Zwei Millionen Chancen. Das Rot-Grüne Regierungsübereinkommen Für Ein Soziales, Weltoffenes Und Lebenswertes Wien’, 91.
[141] Stadt Wien, ‘Die Fortschritts Koalition Für Wien’, 159.
[142] Stadt Wien, 162.

Copenhagenize Index on the Viennese bike infrastructure.[143] That safety is an important prerequisite for having more bike traffic is also confirmed by a study by the Technical University Vienna. There, researchers classified existing bike infrastructure in the categories "subjectively safe/structurally separated" and "subjectively unsafe/not structurally separated" and came up with a priority list of projects where "subjectively safe/structurally separated" bike paths should be erected.[144] The list of projects was not taken over by the coalition agreement, apparently there is no political agreement on their realization. The need of safe bike paths as a general priority has however been accepted.

It is important to analyse how the topic of the needed change in the modal split is addressed in the coalition agreements. The earlier two agreements define 10% as a goal for the share of bike traffic in the modal split.[145] In relation to the modal split, the 2015 coalition agreement also states that bike traffic will be "of significant importance in the future".[146] The 2020 coalition agreement does not define a specific goal for the share of biking in the modal split and here the importance of "active traffic", i.e. biking and walking, is addressed by calling that kind of traffic "indispensable".[147]

Another difference between the coalition agreements is how motorized traffic is included in the parts that talk about active mobility. In the 2010 coalition agreement it is stated that pushing the "Umweltverbund" (public transport, walking, biking) "does not mean to forget about the road network for cars" and therefore there should also be investment made in additional "high-ranking street infrastructure".[148] In the 2015 coalition the notion of "fair distribution" is used and it is made clear that "fair" means more space for pedestrian-, bike- and public mobility, ie. the space that cars take up will need to decrease.[149] Investment into new streets is limited to one specific project ("Stadtstraße Aspern") that was already in the

[143] Copenhagenize Design Co, '09. Vienna'.
[144] Leth, 'Erstellung Einer Prioritätenliste Baulicher Radverkehrsmaßnahmen Für Wien', 7 and 18–26.
[145] Häupl and Vassilakou, 'Gemeinsame Wege Für Wien. Das Rot-Grüne Regierungsübereinkommen', 7; Häupl and Vassilakou, 'Eine Stadt, Zwei Millionen Chancen. Das Rot-Grüne Regierungsübereinkommen Für Ein Soziales, Weltoffenes Und Lebenswertes Wien', 91.
[146] Häupl and Vassilakou, 'Eine Stadt, Zwei Millionen Chancen. Das Rot-Grüne Regierungsübereinkommen Für Ein Soziales, Weltoffenes Und Lebenswertes Wien', 118.
[147] Stadt Wien, 'Die Fortschritts Koalition Für Wien', 159.
[148] Häupl and Vassilakou, 'Gemeinsame Wege Für Wien. Das Rot-Grüne Regierungsübereinkommen', 63.
[149] Häupl and Vassilakou, 'Eine Stadt, Zwei Millionen Chancen. Das Rot-Grüne Regierungsübereinkommen Für Ein Soziales, Weltoffenes Und Lebenswertes Wien', 9 and 91.

planning phase at that time and there it is stated that the planning should be adapted to be more environmentally friendly.[150]

In the 2020 coalition agreement, it is also clearly stated that a "fair distribution" of public space should be achieved, and that public transport and active mobility need to get more space.[151] Concerning additional infrastructure for motorized traffic, in the same way as in the 2015 coalition agreement there is only a commitment to execute the already planned project of "Stadtstraße Aspern". In the 2020 coalition agreement, it is admitted that in planning processes still very often a "car-centric" approach remains. This should be changed, and the active traffic should be considered as a "full and equal component".[152] Moreover, in the latest agreement there seems to be an opening for motorized traffic as long as they are CO2-free. The CO2 reduction in traffic is defined as a goal and it is stated that this can also be achieved by switching from petrol/diesel cars to "CO2 free" motorization.[153] In the other agreements no difference was made concerning motorized traffic in relation to the kind of engine thy have. Only the goal of reducing motorized traffic was set. Incorporating this loophole for motorized traffic could be explained by the change in coalition partners from Grüne to Neos.

I have already highlighted in the quantitative analysis that the number of references to bike sharing has seen a strong increase over the years. When looking at the content, the first conclusions I made based on the quantitative analysis are confirmed here. The importance of bike sharing is growing, and it is not anymore only seen as something that is provided by the city with its own bike sharing system "Citybike". In the 2010 coalition agreement the reference to bike sharing is only touched upon in connection with the goal to extend the Citybike system also to the outer districts of Vienna.[154] In the 2015 coalition agreement the focus concerning the Citybike system is more on modernization and raising the density of stations in the covered area.[155] It also states however that other systems of bike sharing

[150] Häupl and Vassilakou, 96.
[151] Stadt Wien, 'Die Fortschritts Koalition Für Wien', 154.
[152] Stadt Wien, 159.
[153] Stadt Wien, 68.
[154] Häupl and Vassilakou, 'Gemeinsame Wege Für Wien. Das Rot-Grüne Regierungsübereinkommen', 62.
[155] Häupl and Vassilakou, 'Eine Stadt, Zwei Millionen Chancen. Das Rot-Grüne Regierungsübereinkommen Für Ein Soziales, Weltoffenes Und Lebenswertes Wien', 92.

should be supported with the goal to foster “multimodality”.[156] It has been noted already in the section on the STEP documents that the term “multimodality” has been strongly used in the STEP25 document that has been drafted around the same time as the 2015 coalition agreement.

On the topic of the Citybike system, the 2020 coalition agreement reiterates both the need to extend the system to the outer districts (as it has been seen in the 2010 coalition agreement) and the need to modernize the system (as it has been seen in the 2015 coalition agreement).[157] In addition to that it focuses also in general on offerings of “sharing-mobility” which is seen as a broader concept than just the Citybike system. It sets the goal of establishing “10 new fully equipped hubs per year until 2025” without however giving details about what such a hub should be.[158]

Looking at the text sequences that deal with bike parking it can be confirmed what has been drawn as a first conclusion after the frequency analysis: The need to create more spaces for bike parking can be found in all coalition agreements. And in the later ones there is a tendency to focus on more sophisticated installations like garages. One interesting element here is that in the 2020 coalition agreement the need for more bike parking is combined with a measure in connection with climate change: new bike parking should be put on unpaved floor to prevent more soil sealing.[159]

"Image building” as a topic can only be found in the 2010 coalition agreement. The first section concerning this topic talks about the need for cycle traffic promotion.[160] As it has already been noted in the frequency analysis, the fact that this topic does not come back in the other agreements might be based on the realization of the political parties that promotion does not really help increase bike traffic.[161] It has to be said however that based on the 2010 coalition agreement in 2011 the so-called “Radverkehrsbeauftragte” was

[156] Häupl and Vassilakou, 91.
[157] Stadt Wien, ‘Die Fortschritts Koalition Für Wien’, 162 and 154.
[158] Stadt Wien, 166.
[159] Stadt Wien, 138.
[160] Häupl and Vassilakou, ‘Gemeinsame Wege Für Wien. Das Rot-Grüne Regierungsübereinkommen’, 62.
[161] Oosterhuis, ‘Entrenched Habit or Fringe Mode: Comparing National Bicycle Policies, Cultures and Histories.’, 95.

appointed.[162] This position still exists and is in the meantime included in the "Mobilitätsagentur" that continues to promote biking in Vienna on behalf of the city administration.[163] The second section concerning this topic in the 2010 agreement is targeted towards image building within the city administration.[164] This need for internal image building does not come back in the other agreements. However, in the 2020 coalition agreement it is stated that "Infrastructure and public space are still too often thought and planned for the motorized individual traffic ".[165] Thus, this leads to the assumption that even by 2020 a paradigm shift within the administration had not yet fully happened.

In conclusion, the second sub-question aimed to examine how the governing parties portrayed issues of urban mobility transformation regarding biking in their coalition agreements of the past 3 elections. Overall, it can be said that the importance of biking as a key factor for the urban mobility transformation increases. The following paragraphs will summarize the key findings.

In the older agreements, the authors tried to picture biking as an addition to other transport means without taking something away from other road users. The 2020 coalition agreement is clearer in that regard, with the risk of fuelling an "us vs. them" sentiment. Further, the denomination of bikers as a specific group is only found in the 2020 agreement. Conflicts between road users that might be a consequence of urban mobility transformation are only addressed explicitly in the 2020 coalition agreement. Safety in road traffic is another issue that is addressed in all agreements. In 2020 it is highlighted that for an increase in safety, investment in bicycle paths is key. One issue that is mentioned in the 2015 and 2020 coalition agreement is "closing gaps" in the network. From a scientific perspective, it was confirmed that this is a very important element in order to increase biking in Vienna.[166] The notion of "closing gaps" implies that planned projects are not as much a revolutionary step but rather something that is necessary.

[162] Baur, 'Martin Blum Neuer Radverkehrs-Beauftragter Der Stadt Wien'.
[163] Mobilitätsagentur Wien GmbH, 'Über Uns'.
[164] Stadt Wien, 'Die Fortschritts Koalition Für Wien', 62.
[165] Stadt Wien, 159.
[166] Leth, 'Erstellung Einer Prioritätenliste Baulicher Radverkehrsmaßnahmen Für Wien'.

As mentioned in the analysis, the 2015 and 2020 agreements talk about “fair distribution of space”. By that, they refer to that non-motorised individual transport needs to be given more space. However, the governing parties concede to the fact that by 2020 most of the traffic planning in the city is still centred around cars. This might indicate that although awareness for more environmentally friendly transport planning has risen, nevertheless it is not yet always implemented. None of the agreements want to turn explicitly against cars and car users. However, no new projects for streets for motorized traffic have been put on the agenda in the agreements. Only projects that are already planned should be executed. Plus, in the 2020 agreement, it is noted that all new roads should be planned with bicycle infrastructure in mind.

In the beginning, the notion of a liveable city as a pleasant space is mainly used. In the later agreements the use of the word “Umweltverbund” for public transport, biking and walking indicates more and more that climate change and general environmental protection are put in focus and motivate the urban mobility transformation and especially the push for biking.

Another finding that stands out from the results is the way in which the future modal split is talked about. From a clear goal of 10% in the share of mobility accounted to biking (in 2010 and 2015) to a less specific goal to increase the overall share of non-motorized individual transport (in 2020). This discrepancy could be attributed to that it might be easier for the parties to stress the importance of the “Umweltverbund” than to focus specifically on biking. The further development of public transport as part of the “Umweltverbund” is much less a source of conflict than building bike paths. Additionally, since the increase in biking in Vienna has been rather slow the governing parties might want to avoid setting themselves up for failure by stating a tangible goal.

Finally, the change in the participating junior partner in the coalition government (green party in the 2010 and 2015 coalition agreement, liberal party in the 2020 coalition agreement) changed some of the notions in the wording. There is apparently somewhat less sensitivity around the “us vs. them” problematic with the liberal party and they tried to put the focus on innovative solutions. The generally increasing importance that biking is given as an integral part of the traffic in the city however remained.

How do different political parties frame debates around biking in the city council?

In this third part of my analysis, I will now turn to a different kind of document. The transcripts of the oral debates in town council meetings give an insight into the political discourse of the different parties. In chapter 5 I have already explained the particularities of those documents and the reasons for the choice of these three debates that will be analysed here. It might also be interesting to look at the composition of the town council in the three legislative periods from which the meetings were chosen. The relevant elections were in 2010, 2015, and 2020. The parties represented can be seen in the following table:

Party (abbreviation)	**English translation of name**	**Political tendency**
SPÖ	Social Democratic Party Austria	Centre left
ÖVP	Austrian People Party	Conservative, centre right
Grüne	Greens	Environmentalist, left
FPÖ/DAÖ	Freedom Party Austria/The Alliance for Austria	Right
NEOS	The New Austria and Liberal Form	liberal

Table 6.20:Parties represented in the City council and their political orientation.
Source: Own table

The NEOS were only represented in the city council after the elections of 2015 and 2020, all other parties were represented in the city council after all three elections. The FPÖ was split up into two parties, the FPÖ and the DAÖ, during the legislative period that started after the 2015 elections. Therefore, in the council meeting of that period also DAÖ speakers can be found.

For this chapter, no frequency analysis was done, because here in contrast to the other documents the chosen documents only regard biking, while in the other documents, it was important to establish by the quantitative analysis how important biking is for the authors.

When looking at the transcripts of the city council meetings, I focused on the content analysis and used the methods of the critical discourse analysis deployed by Caimotto.[167] Since the debate topics were very individual for each document, I coded each document individually. Therefore, I will not present a table with the distribution of codes in all three documents as I did for the other sources. The specific topics of the three debates are different from each other, however, similar narratives come back whenever the topic of biking is concerned.

Moreover, the outcome and vote of these debates are not the subject of this research, the main aim is to analyse and detect patterns in the language used. As van Dijk points out, part of exercising power is the right to participate in discourse, in this case, the discourse within the city council.[168] All the parties represented in the city council have the right to speak and demand discussions. Hence, they are given the power to influence the discourse. Even if the motion is in the end not accepted by the majority in the city council, a party like the FPÖ has the possibility to put a certain motion on the agenda, as was the case in the first debate chosen for this analysis. Moreover, van Dijk highlights in his research how language in debates held by members of parliament reproduces racism, even if the words chosen are only indirectly racist.[169] Similarly, it can be said that if the language that is used in the city council or the topics that are brought up are against biking then this legitimizes these views to an extent and gives them a platform. The following paragraphs explore how different political parties frame debates around biking in Vienna. There are further issues that could be covered; however, it will be limited to the below-mentioned issues due to the restricted scope of the thesis.

Subtle denial is according to van Dijk a discursive approach used to voice disbelief.[170] One can see in the 2012 debate that the FPÖ members are seeding disbelieve very boldly. For instance, they question that the estimation that Vienna has 1 million bikes is right. One speaker even jokes that the estimate probably counted “Wurstradln” as well to reach that number.[171] “Wurstradln” directly translates as sausage wheel i.e. meaning a round slice of

[167] Caimotto, ‘Discourse Practices and Power’, 2020, 51.
[168] van Dijk, ‘Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis’, 256.
[169] van Dijk, 280.
[170] van Dijk, ‘Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis’.
[171] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, ‘Wörtliches Protokoll 19/27’, 52.

sausage, however, “wheel” also is used as a synonym for “bike”. Similarly, in the 2022 debate, a FPÖ member questions the necessity of a planned bike path construction since in his words:

> “this [the area where the bike path will be] is really the periphery of Simmering and that is already periphery. There is not much cycling there, but you will certainly have done a traffic count.”.

On the one hand, he questions the necessity of the bike path because there aren’t many bikers in his opinion. But he even goes further “Perhaps, one guess, they [the people doing the traffic count] were paid with spritzers to make them count twice, I don't know. In any case, not much is going on there.”.[172] Spritzer is a popular alcoholic drink in Austria, hence he is hinting that the traffic calculation was done drunk. These are two examples of FPÖ not only doubting the traffic counts but also spreading the notion that there are not that many bikers in Vienna and that building infrastructure for bikes is unnecessary.
At several points in all three debates, FPÖ members state that money is wasted on the construction of bike paths and that too much money is allocated for the promotion of cargo bikes. One member even suggest that bike paths should be built only once the city finances are under control. To which he adds “which is never anyway”.[173] This is countered by one member of NEOS with the argument that “from an economic point of view, cycle path construction brings much more added value for the local economy compared to motorway construction and tunnel construction.”.[174] Caimotto also pointed out the connection between economic growth and biking that was outlined in the London Transport strategy. She argues that by drawing this connection bike infrastructure can be sold to bike opposers as a thing that leads to prosperity. However, it does not question if economic growth is even compatible with the climate crisis we are facing at the moment.[175]

One dominant topic in the town council meetings is the conflict between bikers and motorists. Caimotto mentioned in her research that car drivers often feel authorized to take up public space.[176] Similarly to that in the council meetings, some speakers who are pro-cars

[172] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, ‘Wörtliches Protokoll 21/26’, 113.
[173] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 113.
[174] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 114.
[175] Caimotto, ‘London Mayor’s Transport Strategy’, 95.
[176] Caimotto, ‘History, Urban Planning and Controversies’, 43.

seem to believe that since they pay for insurance and parking permits, obtain a license, and adhere to safety regulations (for example safety belts), and can be identified by their numbers plate that they have more right to be taking up space. And they feel like if more public space is given to bikers they are treated unfairly. This idea of "unfair" treatment comes up when the issues of parking spaces and the allocation of funds are talked about. In one instance for example, at the council meeting in 2020 one speaker of the DAÖ said: "Car owners' money is taken, but cyclists get the benefits.".[177] This is a bit of a controversial statement since streets are financed by national and municipal taxes - in other words, the upkeep of streets is paid for by the citizens of Vienna no matter if they drive a car or bike.[178] Horton writes in his research how bikes are often seen as a symbol of environmentalism and cars in contrast represent the dominating culture that bikers are opposing.[179] These opposing powers can be seen in the discourse in the council debates as well. When debating bike path projects, the ÖVP states that a certain bike path will just lead to traffic jams.

> "What we would like to improve in this regard would be to massively expand public transport. Only, this will also be massively torpedoed with the new cycle path in Krottenbachstraße, because there will only be one lane, the bus lane will be eliminated, there will be massive traffic jams. The bus will then be stuck in a traffic jam, and you, ladies and gentlemen, will slow down public transport."[180]

One could even argue that they are using the possible slow down on public transport to stop the bike path project and therefore also conserve space that is allocated to cars. Furthermore, Caimotto writes that given the sense of privileged access of car drivers, further restrictions, and regulations for bicycle riders, such as the requirement for a license and a number plate or compulsory helmet rules, are frequently demanded.[181] This is represented in the council meeting as well, at several points the issue of number plates for cyclists and especially cargo bikes is stated. Here are two examples one from 2020 and one from 2012 where FPÖ condemns that cyclists can get away with breaking the law since they are anonymous:

[177] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 'Wörtliches Protokoll 20/65'.
[178] Stadt Wien, 'Der Wiener Gemeindehaushalt'.
[179] Horton, 'Environmentalism and the Bicycle', 46,51.
[180] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 'Wörtliches Protokoll 21/26', 116.
[181] Caimotto, 'History, Urban Planning and Controversies', 44.

> "(..)and, of course, we would also be in favour of compulsory license plates, not least because, cyclists repeatedly cause damage to vehicles as well as to other road users, such as pedestrians or other cyclists, and then it is very, very difficult to get hold of the person and perhaps hold them responsible for the damage. That can't be a bad thing in a city if someone has a license plate."[182]
>
> "Cyclists are quite simply reckless in their traffic behaviour. (...) Each of you will perhaps be familiar with flagging offences for car drivers. Running a red light is a flag offence. Endangering pedestrians is a flagged offence. The cyclist who does it anonymously, continues, is not recognised, and cannot be detected, is allowed to do it and the "evil" car driver is then punished.[183]

However, the idea that most bikers also have a driver's license and therefore know how to obey the traffic rules is not being entertained by most right-wing speakers.

As described in the previous chapters a "us vs. them" narrative is quite prevalent in the political discourse surrounding biking. It is also visible in the council debates. Firstly, when looking at the language that reflects the opposition towards bikers and building bike infrastructure, the following words are used to describe the reduction in car parking and car lanes: lost, destroyed, sacrificed.[184] Not only the choice of words creates the image that something is taken away from one group, the car users, in an aggressive way but it is also explicitly stated: "(…)you provoke and harass motorists when you maliciously reduce lanes.".[185] Further, FPÖ not only calls bikers reckless but also calls to do something "against bike hooligans, against bike rambos and against combat cyclists". [186] They even go as far as alluding to compare bikers to a left-wing extremist terrorist organisation.[187]

[182] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 'Wörtliches Protokoll 20/65', 55.
[183] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 'Wörtliches Protokoll 19/27', 67.
[184] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 'Wörtliches Protokoll 20/65', 48; Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 'Wörtliches Protokoll 21/26', 113.
[185] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 'Wörtliches Protokoll 19/27', 54.
[186] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 50–51.
[187] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 49.

ÖVP tends to present the "Us" as pedestrians and car drivers who´s life quality and safety are put at risk by bikers.[188] It is also evident from the documents that FPÖ stresses that "the pedestrians" have to be protected against "the cyclists". This is infusing the "us vs. them" narrative as it was described by Caimotto.[189] FPÖ tries to present themselves as the guardians of the weakest.[190] When addressing the necessity to protect pedestrians, other parties like SPÖ for example cannot oppose the message, but they try to turn to the necessity to invest in better and separated infrastructure for bike paths and pedestrians: *"*The most important thing is that the cycle path is clearly separated from the pavement, which is an improvement for pedestrians."[191]

In the debates, it becomes clear that the parties associate different ideas with a city that has a higher biking share. On the one hand, Grüne for example see the increased share of biking as necessary to develop in the right direction for a sustainable future. Especially, since Vienna is facing population growth and public transport is already reaching its limits. As one Grüne member points out: "We have the greatest leverage in Vienna in active mobility, walking, cycling."[192] On the other hand, in the 2022 debate, SPÖ presents the idea that not only have people's needs changed but for the sake of the children and grandchildren the city should move away from motorized traffic.

> "(…) one or the other of you may already have grandchildren who think differently than we thought. That's a good thing. They also live a different urbanity."[193]
> "I'm seeing more and more people saying I don't need a driver's license, I'm orienting myself differently in an urban world - by the way, we are the fifth largest metropolis in Europe. You have to take note of that, too, and we are also there to ensure that we meet people's wishes and demands." [194]

[188] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 'Wörtliches Protokoll 21/26', 120–21; Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 'Wörtliches Protokoll 19/27', 54.
[189] Caimotto, 'Stigmatisation in Newspapers', 60.
[190] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 'Wörtliches Protokoll 19/27', 53.
[191] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 'Wörtliches Protokoll 21/26', 122.
[192] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 219.
[193] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 118.
[194] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 118.

> "We all benefit when traffic is quieter (...). That is simply a stress potential that can be reduced, (...) and this simply makes the city fit for the future and fit for the grandchildren and the climate."[195]

Both Grüne and SPÖ acknowledge that the modal split must change in Vienna. In the previous section I already pointed out that in STEP 25 it is clear that the share of motorized individual transport will need to decrease to 20% until 2025. However, there is no actual percentage allocated to bikes and public transport. It is just stated that 80% of distances covered are done by walking, biking, or public transport. STEP 25 was published during the SPÖ and Grüne coalition and from the council debates it becomes clear that the two parties put different emphasis on biking. Grüne argues that it will be difficult to increase the share of public transport in the modal split in face of the population growth and therefore other options like biking should be further expanded.[196] On the other hand, even though biking should be supported, SPÖ pushes the idea that the biggest change in the modal split will be carried by public transport:

> "Essentially, as far as the modal split is concerned, the biggest determining factor is of course public transport. Anyone who says that we will save the modal split with cycle paths alone has missed something."[197]

Contrary to the rather positive views of Grüne and SPÖ who see biking as a fixed component of the future mobility structure in Vienna, members of ÖVP and FPÖ/DAÖ have rather negative views. Both voice in the 2020 debate that they see biking as a means of transport and its promotion as a thing of the past.

> "Basically, this means of transport is a step backward in the modern transport industry. Where do we start in the near future, do we reintroduce donkey carts and horse-drawn carts, ladies and gentlemen?" [198]
>
> "I don't see the future of mobility as going back and believing that forms of mobility from 30, 50, 70 years ago are the future. It cannot be "Forward to the past!"[199]

[195] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 122.
[196] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 119.
[197] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 117.
[198] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 'Wörtliches Protokoll 20/65', 56.
[199] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 50.

This shows that the parties see biking in very different ways. It is all linked in the end to their view of the future. While some see biking as something very modern and as a solution to traffic and climate issues, others see biking as something old-fashioned and inadequate to solve traffic problems.

In Chapter 4, I explained that urban cycling researchers argue that the topography of a city alone does not justify low cycling levels. [200] However, this opinion seems to be reinforced by right-wing parties in the city council. For instance, one ÖVP member argues that biking in the outer districts is "not necessarily attractive to the users" because of its topography and distances. And that those factors won't change even if the infrastructure is further developed.[201] The argumentation of a FPÖ member goes in a similar direction, who states that since Vienna is hilly and not flat like the Netherlands cargo bikes would need to be e-bikes, and e-bikes have a higher risk of (even fatal) accidents.[202] However, in 2022 a party member of Grüne counters the topography argument by saying that Vorarlberg which is a very mountainous region of Austria has a higher biking share than Vienna. That speaker also highlights that it is a question of the right infrastructure and other circumstances and not topography which explains low cycling levels in Vienna.

In the Netherlands the so-called Bakfiest developed into a staple means of transport for families and businesses to deliver goods. [203] In Vienna politicians still voice scepticism of the usefulness of cargo-bikes. The main source of scepticism is if the cargo bike is useful in case of bad weather and for transporting children some deem it as too dangerous. Already in Chapter 3 I referred to a survey that showed what kind of transport modes people use. The DAÖ only represents a small percentage of voters in the city council however the idea that biking is something one can only do when it is "nice" weather seems to be a very established opinion.[204] This is how the DAÖ adresses the issue of transporting children in cargo bikes:

[200] Bruntlett and Bruntlett, 'Introduction: A Nation of Fietsers'; Colville-Andersen, *Copenhagenize*.
[201] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 'Wörtliches Protokoll 21/26', 116.
[202] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 'Wörtliches Protokoll 20/65', 55.
[203] Bruntlett and Bruntlett, 'Think Outside the Van', 117.
[204] Verwiebe et al., *Lebensqualität in einer wachsenden Stadt - Wiener Lebensqualitätsstudie 2018*.

> "(…) the Grüne's new favourite project [cargo bikes] is being used to transport children, which is negligent enough".[205]

One can see that by linking the promotion of cargo bikes with Grüne and then call it "negligent" they are positioning Grüne as the ones that are putting children in danger and present themselves as the "heroes". This can be connected to one of van Dijk´s discursive moves: Denial and counterattack.[206] Since it displays a positive self-representation of DAÖ and reversal of victim and enemy – making Grüne who represent themselves as protectors of bikers as the enemy of people on bikes. Furthermore, the criticism voiced by DAÖ goes as far as calling the promotion of cargo bikes a "Schnappsidee" (foolish idea) and "no sense of reality".[207]

As far as choosing which means of transport one can use, Caimotto writes that the London transport strategy frames choice in a way that people are automatically led by the circumstances to not use the car and instead bike, walk, or use public transport. This leads to the question of how freely people can decide which modes of transport to use.[208] The issue of choice is something that is also mentioned in the council debates. Here two different views are presented. For one, using a bike instead of cars or overcrowded public transport is framed by the Grüne and SPÖ as the "intelligent choice" which is in line with the tendency that Caimotto detected in the London transport strategy:

"Clever mobility means being able to switch between modes of transport, i.e. creating intermodal interfaces." [209]
"We now have a large number of people switching from cars to bicycles. (...) We want to encourage this intelligence."[210]

Whereas one speaker of the ÖVP stated that some people are reliant on their cars and therefore the city government should not "tell people which means of transport they should

[205] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 'Wörtliches Protokoll 20/65', 48.
[206] Van Dijk, 'Discourse and the Denial of Racism'.
[207] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 'Wörtliches Protokoll 20/65', 48.
[208] Caimotto, 'London Mayor's Transport Strategy', 87.
[209] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 'Wörtliches Protokoll 19/27', 59.
[210] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 57.

use.", and that "Every Viennese has the right to freely choose his or her means of transport.".[211] Yet, this is countered by another speaker also from Grüne, that the city government does not patronize anyone and takes away choice but: "we want to support this trend, namely a trend of reason.".[212] And further, "We are indeed a free society. (...) There is also a fundamental right to get stuck in a traffic jam.".[213] Here one can see that even though Grüne members did not explicitly say that people using cars are stupid or wrong. Still, biking and not using cars is presented as the more intelligent and reasonable choice. Of course, biking has a positive climate value. Meaning that by using a bike instead of a more CO2-intensive mode of transport, emissions are reduced.[214] And given the climate crisis reducing emissions would be the more "intelligent" choice. However, Colville-Andersen argues that to improve the bike share in the modal split of a city policymakers and campaigns should not focus on the positive knockoff effect of bike usage on the CO2 emissions of a town. The most essential way to increase biking and decrease the number of trips taken by car is to transform urban infrastructure in a way that biking becomes the fastest way to reach one´s destination. Asked about what their reasoning is behind going by bike respondents in Copenhagen answered predominantly, because it is quick. The last-mentioned reason was due to environmental concerns.[215]

In conclusion, it can be said that there is a clear difference between the different political parties in how they frame the discourse around biking. ÖVP and FPÖ/DAÖ, parties from the right political spectrum, try to give biking a negative connotation by dwelling on the costs spent for biking infrastructure, the recklessness of bikers, the loss of space because of biking infrastructure. They see biking as something old-fashioned, not really fit for solving the problems of urban mobility. By insisting on freedom of choice they can be seen as holding on to the status quo of cars and by this resisting a necessary change. NEOS, the liberal party, takes a more open approach. They want to continue the efforts to invest in additional biking infrastructure. Additionally, in the debates they argue that biking infrastructure supports economic growth. SPÖ and Grüne, parties from the left political spectrum, both see biking as something that should be supported. However, only Grüne clearly name biking as the key to

[211] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 55.
[212] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 56.
[213] Gemeinderat der Bundeshauptstadt Wien, 57.
[214] Massink et al., 'The Climate Value of Cycling'.
[215] Colville-Andersen, *Copenhagenize*, 148.

achieve real changes in the modal split. Both parties hope that in the end people will make the “intelligent” choice for biking. This could be a problematic narrative, because it can be seen as stigmatizing those who do not bike as not intelligent. This could fuel the negative discourse of right-wing parties.

7. Conclusion

The aim of the present research was to examine how the political discourse about biking in Vienna changed from 2005 to 2022. This was motivated by previous research stating that for biking policies to effectively work, perceptions and habits need to be analysed and addressed. Vienna has in comparison to other European cities and even compared to other Austrian cities a low level of biking.[216] Further, discourse reinforces structures, and by analysing the discourse in the Vienna city council and in documents drafted or strongly influenced by parties represented in the Vienna city council, I intended to gather more insight into which perceptions of biking are existing as well as how viewpoints on various issues might have changed.

Overall, this study strengthens the idea that the political will to improve the biking infrastructure in Vienna is now present. This was visible in the plans presented in STEP 25 and in the coalition agreements. The most prominent difference between STEP 05 and STEP 25 is that cycling is far more accepted as a daily mode of transport in the more recent plan. In STEP 05 biking is predominantly talked about as a leisure and sport activity. This study has also identified that over time biking is taken more seriously in the coalition agreements as a central piece in the transformation of urban mobility. The third major finding was that based on the three council meetings that were analysed in this thesis the political parties which are leaning toward the political right spectrum are less in favour of or in some cases even opposing bike infrastructure in Vienna.

This thesis has provided a deeper insight into the language in political documents regarding biking and additionally has shown reoccurring patterns. One analytical narrative that came up in all three sources to different extents is the “us vs. them” dichotomy. The research has shown that over time bikers are not directly addressed in the urban development plans. This could be seen as an effort to avoid pitting road users against each other. Considering this, it will be interesting to see how the issue is addressed in the new STEP, if road users are addressed directly, or if the plans will be phrased in an inclusive way. A comparison of the three coalition agreements showed that the 2020 coalition agreement differs from the two

[216] Verwiebe et al., *Lebensqualität in einer wachsenden Stadt - Wiener Lebensqualitätsstudie 2018*, 22.

prior agreements in that it expressly addresses problems linked to the construction or expansion of bike routes. The agreement recognizes the distinctive conflict between bikers, pedestrians, and automobiles and seeks to settle current issues between these groups. I have highlighted that the 2020 coalition agreement, unlike the earlier documents, specifically recognizes bikers as a separate category. Referring to Caimotto, an implication of this is the possibility that this explicit focus on group divisions may mistakenly promote a "us vs. them" mindset.[217] In the council debates the presentation of people on the road as separate groups is similarly prevalent. Here however also in a clearly negative “us vs. them" narrative. Especially right-wing parties like ÖVP and FPÖ/DAÖ advocate for “pedestrians” and “cars” as separate identities that need to be protected from “bikers”.

The findings of this study suggest that at least in STEP 25 it is stipulated that more space and more secure structures should be allocated to bikes. Further, the coalition agreement from 2015 calls for a fair distribution of public space, and the 2020 agreement acknowledges that in the past urban planning was too much centred around cars. However, in the subchapter on the discourse in the city council, I pointed out the language that is used by some members shows that these impulses of change are met with resentment. There the discourse remains in a fighting mode against “sacrificing” parking spaces and road infrastructure to space for bike paths.

STEP 05 and the coalition agreement from 2010 mention advertising and educational campaigns for biking. This is not mentioned in the newer documents. One reason for this might be the circumstance that such measures are mostly received by people who are interested in biking, and they do not entice more people to use bikes.[218] Additionally, only the coalition agreement from 2010 mentions the “Radverkehrsbeauftragte”. Nevertheless, the “Radverkehrsbeauftragte” is still financed by the city budget and is entrusted the task to promote biking. For further research, it might be interesting to see if this appointment and activities influenced the perception of biking in Vienna.

[217] Caimotto, ‘Discourse Practices and Power’, 2020.
[218] Oosterhuis, ‘Entrenched Habit or Fringe Mode: Comparing National Bicycle Policies, Cultures and Histories.’, 96.

In general, the research has shown that there has been some development in the politics concerning biking in the last 15 years. This development can be seen as a continuation of the gradual changes in policies around biking in Vienna since 1945. A progression from considering automobiles as the future mode of transportation to a strong emphasis on public transportation as the essential component, there is a growing realization that biking may be a vital part of the solution to the traffic problem. The city council meetings have shown that there is a clear resistance to this development, but that was true also with other changes that in the end made their way, like banning cars from the city centre or heavy investment in public transport.[219]

In the literature review it was mentioned that given the habitus of a city the development of cycling levels might be sluggish. [220] One could say that the habitus also leads to resistance in the city council as the decision-making body in Vienna and therefore interferes with further change. However, Colville-Andersen stated that bike-friendly developments in Amsterdam and Copenhagen took 40 years.[221] Taken together, the findings of the thesis suggest that there has been some change in perceptions and policies towards biking in Vienna. At this point the question remains if the developments from 2005 to 2022 are the foundation of further bike-friendly developments and if biking can become as habituated and unquestioned as in Netherlands and Denmark.

The small sample size of council meetings did not allow to present a detailed judgment of the opinion on biking over time in the council debates. Nevertheless, even with only three council meetings, it became apparent how the different parties feel about cycling. The analysis of the urban development plans and coalition agreement showed a gradual change towards a more bike-friendly way of thinking. Those documents were in the hands of SPÖ, Grüne, and Neos who over time seem to have accepted that to increase sustainable mobility in Vienna biking infrastructure needs to be improved and expanded. The opinions of FPÖ/DAÖ and ÖVP were only displayed in the council debates. As explained in the last chapter, the different visions of the future made it apparent that FPÖ/DAÖ and ÖVP

[219] Pirhofer and Stimmer, *Pläne Für Wien Theorie Und Praxis Der Wiener Stadtplanung von 1945 Bis 2005*, 37.
[220] Hachleitner, 'Infrastruktur, Topographie Oder Doch Politik Und Kultur? Eine Historische Analyse von Faktoren Der Radverkehrsentwicklung Wiens Im Vergleich Mit Anderen Städten'; Bourdieu, *Zur Soziologie der symbolischen Formen*.
[221] Colville-Andersen, *Copenhagenize*, 112.

perceive biking as a means of transport of the past. The right-wing parties questioned traffic counts and insinuated that bike lanes would decrease the quality of life for the people of Vienna. These are just some examples showing the resistance that seems to persist in the city council towards biking. With a bigger sample and the help of a distance reading software like R, future research could illustrate a temporal development of how often and in what way biking is presented by different parties.

Despite its exploratory nature, this study offers some insight into the development and current state of the political discourse regarding one integral part of the urban mobility transformation. Especially, in STEP 25 the focus is set on sustainability and a better future – ie. focus on the positive outcomes. In contrast, the contributions of ÖVP and FPÖ/DAÖ show resistance against this change. Caimotto writes that by focusing on the beneficial outcomes of transport policies, the authors may be failing to acknowledge the work that might be required to implement alteration to the daily lives of individuals.[222] The city council is just small "sample" of people. Still, members are voted by the people of Vienna and therefore it could be argued that the opinions presented in the city council somehow also represent the wider perception of biking in Vienna. Further research should investigate the wider discourse on biking in Vienna. By possibly including newspaper articles or bike lobby blogs, a better portrayal of society could be produced.

In general, continued efforts are needed to make biking a more frequent choice of transport. In the chapter on the history of city planning in Vienna one can see that since the 1980s the focus was put on public transport expansion.[223] Evidently this strategy has contributed to making Vienna one of the most livable cities in the world.[224] In the council meetings it was visible that some parties favour investing into public transport over bike infrastructure. At the same time the issue of population growth putting a strain on public transport is also being raised. Therefore, the question remains if focusing on a public transport expansion is enough given the climate crisis.

[222] Caimotto, 'London Mayor's Transport Strategy', 95.
[223] Pirhofer and Stimmer, *Pläne Für Wien Theorie Und Praxis Der Wiener Stadtplanung von 1945 Bis 2005*, 25.
[224] The Economist Intelligence Unit Ltd., 'The Global Liveability Index 2023'.

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