



Press Release Kidical Mass Action Alliance

UPDATE : The great mobility turnaround of the little legs Around 440 Demonstrations for Childfriendly Streets

Berlin/Bern/Hamburg/Köln/London/Verden, 2 May 2023

Between 5th and 7th May 2023, the Kidical Mass action alliance will get tens of thousands of people onto their bikes in over 440 locations, demanding "**Streets are for everyone!**" - from urban to rural areas.

On the action days, children, parents, friends and schools campaign for child- and bicycle-friendly places, safe routes to school and independent mobility. With big colourful Kidical Mass bicycle demonstrations, school streets and bike buses "Bicibús", all generations can get involved in showing how cities and communities should be designed.

In the middle of it all: thousands of children and young people who, for a brief moment, don't have to be brave to cycle on the streets.

Why do they take part? **This is how Paul, 10 years old from Cologne, puts it:**

"I wish there were cycle paths where I am protected from the cars!"

Children have to go to school. It is the responsibility of adults and lawmakers to ensure that they get there safely. The Kidical Mass calls on the latter to quickly create adequate framework conditions with a reformed road traffic law. The legislator must focus on the need to protect children and give cities and municipalities the freedom to implement child- and bicycle-friendly measures not only at individual danger spots, but throughout the entire urban area. This includes, amongst other things, protected or structurally separated, wide cycle paths, 30 km/h speed limits on main roads in towns, and school streets without motorised traffic.

Simone Kraus, co-initiator of Kidical Mass, sums it up:

"Children have a right to move around safely, independently and well protected. Only when we focus on children and vulnerable people in transport policy will we create a future-oriented design of public space for all. Cities like Paris, Ghent and Utrecht are now leading the way and are transforming the transport system quickly and efficiently. That's exactly what we want too!"

GERMANY: Conference of Ministers of Transport - Kidical Mass working on a change in legislation

In order to realise the great mobility turnaround of the little legs, a legal framework and a clear political prioritisation are needed. The foundation for this was laid by Kidical Mass's petition for child-friendly road traffic legislation, which was signed by around 90,000 Germans in 2022. In March 2023, "child-friendly mobility" was an agenda item at the conference of ministers of transport for the first time.

In a joint resolution, the ministers of transport of the federal states call on Federal Transport Minister Volker Wissing to implement the reform of the Road Traffic Act and Road Traffic Regulations agreed upon in the coalition agreement of the government. They even go one step further. In justifying their demand to the minister, they follow the argumentation of the Kidical Mass petition. A child-friendly traffic system is an essential prerequisite for the independent, active mobility of children on their way to kindergarten or school as well as in their leisure time. This also applies to other vulnerable groups. A modern road traffic law and a transport infrastructure that promotes this mobility increases the safety and quality of stay in public spaces for all population groups.



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It is not only about safe mobility, but also about a better quality of life for all generations. The participants of the Kidical Mass will remind the political decision-makers all over the country of this mission in a colourful and loud way.

About the Kidical Mass Action Alliance: The Kidical Mass is a worldwide movement which Germany joined in 2017. In colourful bicycle demonstrations, cyclists between the ages of 0 to 99 conquer the streets. The Kidical Mass campaigns for child- and bicycle-friendly cities and communities. At the heart of the action alliance are more than 400 local organisations and initiatives. A unique network - decentralised, self-organised and strong together. It is supported by supra-regional partners: ADFC, Campact, Changing Cities, Clean Cities Campaign, Deutsches Kinderhilfswerk, Greenpeace, Parents For Future, Pro Velo Schweiz, VCD and Zukunft Fahrrad.

Hashtags: #KidicalMass #StreetsForAll #StreetsForKids

All action locations and info here: <https://kidsonbike.org/>

For further information, interview requests and pictures:

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Quotations from the organisations of the Kidical Mass action alliance:

ADFC Federal Chair Rebecca Peters says: "Whether in big cities or in the countryside: more and more people are cycling in their everyday lives, as surveys like the ADFC Bicycle Climate Test show. But: the cycling conditions in German cities and municipalities are often still unsatisfactory. In order for everyone, including children, young people and senior citizens, to be able to cycle safely and independently, we need modern road traffic laws and continuous cycle path networks. We therefore call on Transport Minister Wissing to modernise the Road Traffic Act and put road safety, climate protection and quality of life at the top of the agenda - so that cycling feels like being at a Kidical Mass every day."

Annika Liebert, Campact: "We must also consider the needs of the smallest road users in a serious traffic turnaround. Transport Minister Volker Wissing's blinkered view of motorways is not getting us anywhere - on the contrary, we are treading water. With thousands of cycling children and adults all over Germany, we will show Wissing at the Kidical Mass what a real traffic turnaround looks like."



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Ragnhild Sørensen, Changing Cities: "Every day children are injured on the roads. Not because they are careless, but because their safety is not prioritised. Instead, the Road Traffic Act and the Highway Code are about the fluidity and ease of motorised traffic. With the Kidical Masses, we show what fluidity and ease of child mobility can look like: Safe, communal and fun. The positive side effect: safe routes for children are safe routes for everyone."

Barbara Stoll, Director, Clean Cities Campaign: "Around 1200 European children lose their lives due to breathing toxic air every year, in addition to the more than 500 whose lives are lost in traffic accidents. These are dreadful statistics and city leaders and governments must do more to protect them. School streets create healthier and safer environments outside the school gates and help encourage parents to think twice before driving their kids to school and instead consider healthier and cleaner options; such as cycling, walking and public transport. Governments need to take immediate action to create streets for kids across Europe."

The Federal Director of the German Children's Fund, Holger Hofmann, emphasises: "We finally need a holistic development of cities and communities in which children and young people also feel comfortable. Therefore, we should move towards enabling the young generation to participate continuously, comprehensively and from as early as possible in the field of urban and transport planning. For this, we need a changed traffic policy to ensure more safety for children in road traffic. Children who move independently in road traffic and cycle to school, for example, actively perceive their surroundings. They learn to orientate themselves well and to take care of themselves. This strengthens their self-confidence - also for other life situations. Therefore, we demand a transport policy that is orientated towards the needs of children and young people and a real mobility turnaround."

Kerstin Haarmann, VCD national chairwoman: "Speeding cars and poor infrastructure are the reason why parents prefer to chauffeur their children around in their cars instead of getting on their bikes with them - and that means something is going seriously wrong with transport policy. With Kidical Mass, we get kids moving and call on politicians to create safe framework conditions and make our roads fit for the future."

Markus Burbach, Parents for Future Germany (press team): "The mobility shift towards a transport system that emits as little CO₂ as possible is an essential part of a climate protection policy that wants to stop the earth from heating up by a further 1.5 degrees. An essential cornerstone of this is the expansion of the bicycle infrastructure and fear-free movement on our roads for all people. Children in particular, those just starting out on the roads, need safe routes. The same applies to the transport sector: climate policy must be generation-friendly."

Elena Laidler-Zettelmeyer, Zukunft Fahrrad: "The foundation of our mobility behaviour is laid in childhood. If children can move safely and freely on a bicycle on public streets, they will also appreciate the numerous advantages of the bicycle in their everyday life as adults. The Kidical Mass gives children the opportunity to experience real freedom and autonomy on a bike. Because in reality, these are limited by a lack of infrastructure and excessive car traffic. The demonstration sends a clear signal to the political leaders: we are asking you to create enough space for children to cycle safely in everyday life."