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What can cities do to support cyclelogistics?

I don't think this is the right question.

During the fifteen years I've now been working using a cargobike on a daily basis, I got to follow the development in Vienna quite attentively. I am convinced that the existing cargobike businesses in Vienna have all been built up out of their own initiative, very hard work and a mindset that has yet not been significantly supported by the city. I had to start my window cleaning business with little money and never got any financial support from authorities. Nevertheless I am still in my carfree business after fifteen years and better than ever, for the simple reason that my use of cargobike is profitable. The same applies to other cargobike businesses in Vienna. They work hard and as far as I know none of them exists because of political incentives, but simply because they are either profitable or at least expected to be profitable in the future. As far as I'm informed, there is one that has a big private sponsor, but that's still business, not politics.

Politics want to please majorities, so they rather follow trends instead of setting them, and when they support something that only a small minority does, the support will be as insignificant as the minority is. It usually takes tens of thousands of euros even to start a small business, so it is not the thousand euros that you get from politics for your cargobike which will decide whether you stay in business or go bust. Please don't get me wrong: I am very fond of the municipality of Vienna supporting the purchase of a cargobike with thousand Euros, and I know that it is hard to find the 200.000 Euros for this support in a very tight budget. But I also think that it serves quite a lot of people who would have bought a cargobike anyway, and that there are more efficient ways of fuelling the spread of cargobike use.

In the 18th century the King of Prussia had the potato presented in every village as a new food, but the peasants thought it was rubbish. Only when he had his men create "secret" potato fields which were guarded by soldiers, the peasants began to think there could be something useful in growing potatoes. So maybe it would be better for a municipality to buy cargobikes and use them instead of supporting others for doing something they don't do themselves and thus being contradictory. There are thousands

of people working for the municipality of Vienna, and many of them could use a cargobike for their work. If the city bought them fully equipped cargobikes for the 200.000 Euros dedicated for the support, private business people would see that it is profitable. And the media could tell everyone: Vienna buys cargobikes instead of cars because they turn out to be more profitable!

I think that cargobikes don't need the old top down approach that environmentally friendly things are unattractive to customers and need projects and financial aid. Cargobikes are profitable and cool, and the best way of making people understand is using one and showing it as much as possible.

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