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**Group of Experts on Road Signs and Signals**

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> This document is submitted by the International Federation of Pedestrians concerning the use of G13 sign ("No through road" sign).

I.   The living end roads project

A.   Rationale

The Vienna convention provides a "no through road" sign, which "placed at the entry to a road, shall mean that there is no throughway[1]". The sign (G13) is valuable for motorized vehicle drivers, but is of no value for cyclists and pedestrians. On the contrary, in the frequent case that these roads have an exit usable by pedestrians or cyclists, the sign provides misleading information to the non-motorized road users. The sign discourages cyclists and pedestrians to take that road, by conveying the risk having to come back on their steps. However, these roads are generally part of the most appropriate itineraries for cyclists and pedestrians, both from a road safety as a comfort point of view.
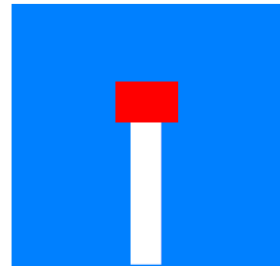
G, 13

A "no through road" is often referred to as a dead-end road. The International Federation of Pedestrians proposes to rename and appropriately sign the subgroup of those road which continue as a road or path usable by pedestrians or cyclists. We propose to call these "living end roads".

II.   Current signage of living end roads:

In some countries, additional panels are used "except

bicyclists" below the local version of the G13 sign. This adds to the cost of the signage and the clutter in the public space.

These panels require text which might be difficult to understand for people not speaking the local language. Such additional panels are used rather rarely (except in The Netherlands). An additional panel "except pedestrians" (for example, in case the street continues with some stairs, or in a pedestrian zone where cyclists are not allowed) poses some inconsistency and legal issues. A road user category cannot really be excluded from the implication of a sign if the sign in the first place does not even legally apply to them.

E18.1

Contrary to danger warning signs and regulatory signs, informative signs can be modified by the road authority to reflect the local situation.

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[1]   Section G.V.3

Denmark started modifying the E18 sign some 40 years ago by adding a small vertical line above the red rectangle to indicate that cyclists can continue (sign E18.1). Sweden followed later by adding a bicycle icon in a rectangle. More recent modifications (France, Germany and Belgium) go one step further and allow providing information for pedestrians and cyclists separately. The use of the bicycle or pedestrian pictogram in the sign itself avoids the use of words such as "except", making it more universal.
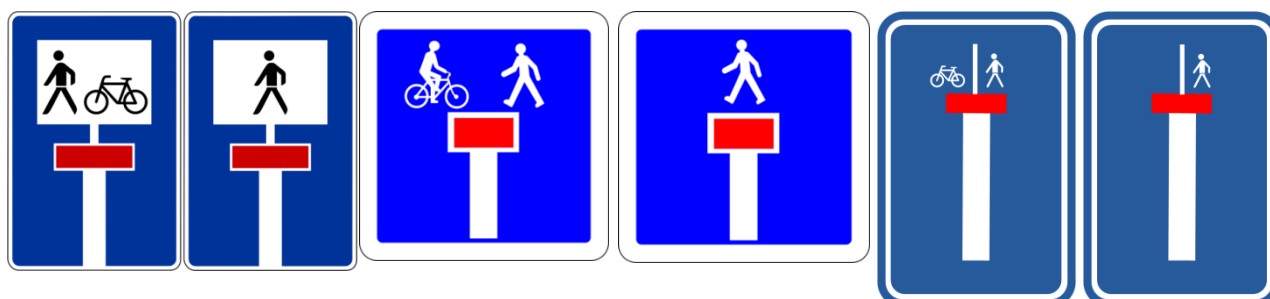
B.   The official living end signage in (from left to right) Germany, France and Belgium.

To notice is the broad variety of graphical approaches taken by the different countries. The International Federation of Pedestrians (IFP) proposes not to change the basic lay-out, but only to provide additional information in a non-cluttering way. The approach would be that the perception of the sign from a distance (important for motorists) would be very similar to the basic dead-end street sign, while closer observers (cyclists and pedestrians) would be informed about their possibilities. Fussverkehr Schweiz, the Swiss Pedestrian Organization, studied[2] alternative signage, evaluating both additional panels and pictograms on the original sign. Road user preferences and readability of different alternatives were tested. The signage containing a small vertical line and an icon of a cyclist and/or pedestrian was clearly preferred, and 84% of the respondents rated the additional information as "important" or "meaningful". That signage has subsequently been proposed by the IFP in Belgium, and taken as such in the Belgian legislation.

In some countries, the official sign for the dead end streets provide for ample space between the red rectangle and the top of the sign. This allows modification of the existing signs in situ to living end signs, rather than replacing the current signs. This is the case in Belgium, Switzerland and Spain. An estimated 7000 signs have already been changed in situ by traffic-grade reflective laser-cut stickers in Belgium. Municipalities participating in this sign upgrade reported that between 60 and 90% of their dead end streets actually are living end streets.

III.   Possibilities for the local road authority

This project is ideally suited for the local road authority, often the municipality, since they are where the knowledge of the field resides, including the right of ways, footpaths and cycle tracks. With a relatively small effort, results that are valuable and visible can be

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2   Wege aus den Sackgassen, Fussverkehr Schweiz, 2006. In cooperation with ATSTRA, the Swiss Road Authority, and within the frame of an EU Interreg project "SPATIAL METRO" A Network for Discovery on Foot

generated. The living end road project wants to stimulate them to look at their inventory of "dead end road" signs and assess which of those in fact are living end roads.

Implementing requires making an inventory of the existing dead-end signs in the area, determining which of those require adaptation to living end signs, making the change, and documenting it.

C.   Value of the project

The goal of the project is more than to have the relevant information available to the cyclist or pedestrian passing by. The "collateral" effects might be as important. Municipalities and people in the administration will have spent some time thinking about the road network from a sustainable road user point of view. Through this low-threshold project, they might become more sensitized and motivated to take pedestrians (and cyclists) rights and issues more into account in their daily work. And the road user might discover new routes, and maybe even decide to explore them leaving his/her car behind.