

CYCLING IN THE EU: WHITE PAPER

MEP Briefing

This briefing provides an overview of the ECF's views on the priorities and policies that must shape the EU's strategy on the Future of Transport. It refers to the main sections in the European Parliament Draft Report, submitted by Rapporteur MEP Mathieu Grosch [2011/2096(INI)] and amendments 1 – 413.

Introduction

Cycling is good for the economy. The economy suffers from **congestion**, stemming from an imbalance in supply and demand. **Cycling** as an efficient land-use mode of transport can be a powerful **solution** in finding a better balance. As the Commission acknowledgesⁱ, 50 % of all car trips are shorter than 5 kms, and a large share of these trips could be readily substituted by walking and cycling.

A recent studyⁱⁱ compared bicycle vs. car use and its total costs to the economy. The result: every km cycled costs 1.55 cents, whereas every km driven by car costs 98.38 cents. In other words: **every km cycled instead of driven saves the economy 96.83 cents.**

According to the best available dataⁱⁱⁱ, people in the EU-27 currently cycle about 94 billion km annually.

This means that **Cycling saves the European economy 91 billion Euro annually.**

It should be remembered that the savings generated from cycling are largely derived from cycling's health benefits. However, the data cited only takes reduced mortality into account, and not reduced morbidity. These figures can therefore be considered very conservative estimates and have likely underestimated the economic savings brought about by cycling.

Table: Costs for the Overall Economy: Bicycle vs. Car

Indicator [€-ct/km]	Internal		External		Total	
	Bicycle	Car	Bicycle	Car	Bicycle	Car
Health	0	0	89.89	0	89.89	0
Noise	0	0	0	-1.02	0	-1.02
Accidents	-6.29	-1.44	-8.42	-1.85	-14.71	-3.29
Running costs	-10.2	-38.3	0	-	-10.2	-38.3
Travel time	-66.53	-54.29	0	-	-66.53	-54.29
Pollutants	0	0	0	-0.63	0	-0.63
CO ₂	0	0	0	-0.85	0	-0.85
Total	-83.02	-94.03	81.47	-4.35	-1.55	-98.38
Difference bicycle - car	11.01		85.82		96.83	

Proposals

ECF Supports the following Proposals:

■ **Doubling the Number of Cyclists' by 2020**

Amendments 192 (Greens-EFA), 194 (S&D), 198 (EPP), 203 (GUE)

■ **European Commission cross-service strategy on non-motorised transport (Master Plan Walking and Cycling)**

Amendments 192 (Greens-EFA), 200 (S&D), 306 (GUE)

■ **15 % of EU co-funding in transport in favour of infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists**

Amendments 192 (Greens-EFA) and 306 (GUE)

■ **Including EuroVelo, the European long-distance cycle-route network, into the TEN-T Network**

Amendment 156 (Greens-EFA)

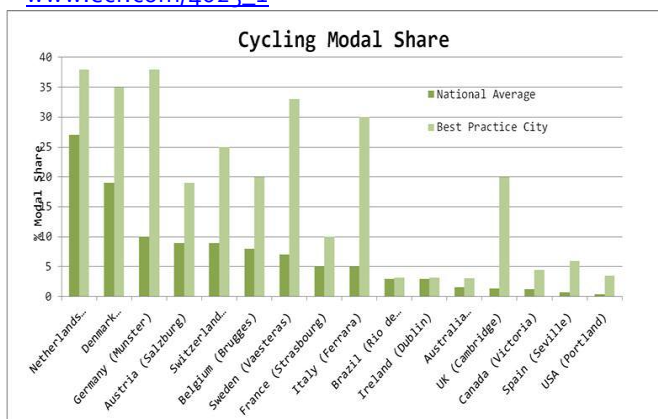
Justifications

■ **Doubling the number of cyclists (by 2020)**

Concrete modal split targets serve as benchmarks. As it currently stands, 7.4 % of Europeans use the bicycle as their main mode of transport.^{iv}

The "Charter of Brussels", signed by the European Economic and Social Council and about 65 cities during the Velo-city conference in 2009 calls upon the European institutions to set the target at 15 % cycling modal share by 2020. Signatory cities include Athens, Brabantstad, Bordeaux, Brussels, Budapest, Copenhagen, Edinburgh, Gdansk, Graz, Helsinki, Krakow, Lodz, Luxembourg City, Madrid, Milan, Munich, Seville, Timisora, Thessaloniki, Toulouse, Torino, Valenica et al.

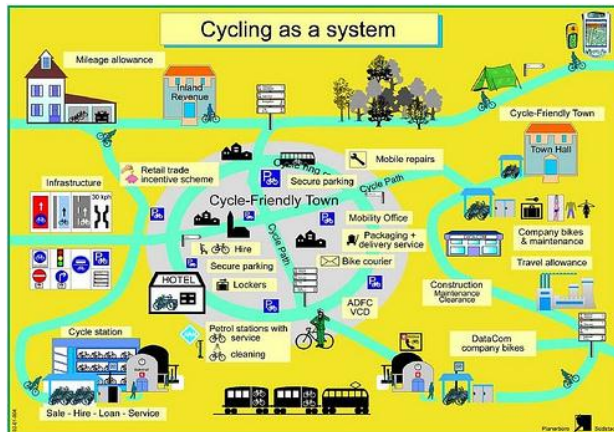
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Graph: Cycling Modal Share in selected European Countries 2010.

■ **European Commission cross-service strategy on non-motorised transport (Master Plan Walking and Cycling)**

Walking and cycling are primary but not exclusive urban responsibilities. At a national level, many governments have realized that an integrated strategy is needed, as walking and cycling cover different horizontal policy fields: transport and mobility, environment, regional development, health, tourism, enterprise, and sports. Countries that have presented a strategic plan on cycling in the past include Austria, Belgium (Flanders, Brussels, Wallonia), Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Malta, Slovenia and the UK. Europe also needs such a strategy if it is to fully tap into the potential of walking and cycling. The European Commission Policy Orientations on Road Safety 2011 – 2020 state: "Given the significant environmental, climate, congestion and public health benefits of cycling, it merits reflection whether more could be done in this area." (COM(2010) 389 final, p.12. It is now time for this 'reflection' to be put onto paper.



Infographic: Cycling as a system: Ride your Bike. German National Cycle Master Plan 2002 – 2012.

■ 15 % of EU co-funding in transport in favour of infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists

Historically speaking, cycling is a sector which suffers from under-investment both within most EU countries and from the EU itself. Only 0.7% of EU co-funding in transport is earmarked for cycling infrastructure for the financial period of 2007-2013. Hence, we believe that 15% of these funds being allocated to walking and cycling is justified. Cycling infrastructure that could be co-funded includes:

- Urban Infrastructure: Integrated bicycle infrastructure networks;
- Sub-urban/ Regional/ National Infrastructure: Bicycle highways;
- European Infrastructure: EuroVelo, the European long-distance cycle route network;
- Bike rental schemes;
- Bike parking stations at intermodal hubs (railway stations, etc.).

Best Practice Example: The Dutch

The Netherlands is considered as being the best cycling country in Europe with a cycling modal share of 27 %. All authorities invest a combined total of € 410 million in cycling infrastructure (i.e. € 25 pp/a). Out of this budget, about € 100 million

will be spent annually on creating a 675 km bicycle highway network by 2020. The rate of return-of-investment is about 1 : 1.44 – 3.58, depending on the scenario.^v

- Scenario 1) construction of bike highway network
- Scenario 2) construction of bike highway network + 50 % of all Dutch bikes are electric bicycles



Picture: Cycling Infrastructure in the Netherlands.

Table: Return on Investment for different scenarios

	Benefits with bike highways	Benefits if 50 % of bikes are Pedelecs (electric bicycles)
Mobility and economic benefits (reducing congestion; improving accessibility)	Ca. € 40 million (- 0.7 % car use in the Netherlands; + 1.3 % cycling → 3.8 million hours less lost in traffic jams à10 €/ h)	Ca. € 100 million (-1.6 % car use in the Netherlands; + 3.3 % cycling → 9.4 million hours less lost in traffic jams à10 €/ h)
Health	Ca. € 100 million (117 saved lives in terms of reduced mortality/ HEAT for cycling)	Ca. € 250 million (306 saved lives in terms of reduced mortality/ HEAT for cycling)
Environment	€ 4 million (80 000 saved CO ₂ × 50 €/ t CO ₂ ; Is about 0.5 % of total annual Dutch CO ₂ emissions)	€ 8 million (120.000 saved CO ₂ × 50 €/ t CO ₂ ; is about 0.9 % of total annual Dutch CO ₂ emissions)
Total	€ 144 million	€ 358 million

■ **Include EuroVelo, the European long-distance cycle-route network, into TEN-T**

Integrating the EuroVelo Network (at the very least as an associated Network) into TEN-T should be high on the transport agenda. It should be considered as an opportunity for promoting European trans-border cycling infrastructure networks, as well supporting soft mobility and sustainable tourism.

European citizens demand high levels of mobility. They want to travel unimpeded, using seamless transportation networks. In this respect, EuroVelo aims to link up existing regional and national cycle routes and complete missing sections. Moreover, cycling tourism is a booming business and strongly supports both rural and regional economies. According to a study^{vi} commissioned by the European Parliament the

total estimated economic impact of the EuroVelo Network when complete is 12.5 million holiday trips per year and 33.3 million day excursions per year, generating almost €5 billion direct revenue annually.

The European Parliament already gave its support to EuroVelo in its resolution^{vii} on the European Commission Green Paper on the Future of TEN-T, which "Asks the Commission and the Member States to consider the Eurovelo-Network and Iron Curtain Trail as an opportunity for promoting European trans-border cycling infrastructure networks, supporting soft mobility and sustainable tourism".



The 14 EuroVelo long-distance cycling routes

Endnotes

- i. In: Commission Staff Working Document Accompanying the White Paper - Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system, par. 61.
- ii. Trunk G. (2011) Gesamtwirtschaftlicher Vergleich von Pkw- und Radverkehr. Ein Beitrag zur Nachhaltigkeitsdiskussion. Masterarbeit am Institut für Verkehrswesen der Universität für Bodenkultur, Wien
- iii. EU Energy & Transport in Figures, Statistical Pocketbook, 2001, EU Transport in Figures, Statistical Pocketbook 2000.
- iv. Flash Eurobarometer 312 (March 2011)
- v. Fietsfilevrij: Workshop fietssnelwegen 1 maart: Wat levert het op? 28 februari 2011.
- vi. The European Cycle Route Network EuroVelo, Study commissioned by the European Parliament, 2009.
- vii. Adopted on 22 April 2009, (2008/2218(INI)).

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About Us



The European Cyclists' Federation (ECF) represents the interests of bicycle users, is based in Brussels and has over 60 member organizations across 40 countries.

As well as advocating for better cycling policies and promoting cycling at the international level in general, ECF has a range of programs including EuroVelo, the European cycle route network, the global networks "Scientists for cycling" and "Cities for Cyclists", the Velo-city and Velo-city Global conference series.

ECF is a main partner in several EU funded projects such as PRESTO and CYCLE Logistics.

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