

Policy Recommendations

Promoting Cycling Tourism and enhancing the EuroVelo network in Finland, Sweden, Estonia and Poland



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Cycling tourism is increasingly recognized as a strategic component of sustainable development, contributing to environmental, economic, and public health goals. In recent years, several key policy frameworks at the European level have emphasized the importance of developing cycling infrastructure and culture across the continent. Notably, the *European Declaration on Cycling*, proposed by the European Commission in 2023, outlines a comprehensive strategy to promote cycling as a sustainable, accessible, and health-enhancing mode of transport. This declaration aligns closely with the EU's broader Green Deal objectives, aiming to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve urban air quality, and facilitate a shift towards more sustainable travel behavior—including in the tourism sector.

Complementing this, the *Pan-European Master Plan for Cycling Promotion*, adopted in 2021 under the joint auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe, sets ambitious targets to significantly increase cycling levels across the region. It advocates for the expansion of high-quality cycling infrastructure, the integration of cycling into national transport and health policies, and the development of supportive legal and financial frameworks. The plan highlights the multifaceted benefits of cycling, from reducing congestion and pollution to boosting local economies and enhancing public health.

The EuroVelo network of long-distance cycle routes that cross and connect the European continent supports reaching the goals and objectives of the aforementioned documents. The development of EuroVelo will lead to safe, direct, coherent, and connected cycling infrastructure and cycle route networks that will benefit all categories of cyclists, making cycling more accessible for various groups. The network is developed and coordinated by the European Cyclists' Federation ([ECF](#)), as one of its core brands and activities, in cooperation with a network of [National EuroVelo Coordination Centres and Coordinators](#).

Fully developed EuroVelo network would connect national, regional and local cycle route networks and other sustainable modes of transport. Strategically developing cycling tourism not only supports these high-level initiatives but also contributes to multiple EU and national policy objectives. By linking mobility, environmental sustainability, rural development, and economic resilience, cycling tourism presents a unique opportunity to stimulate local economies, especially in less-visited areas, while advancing the EU's green and inclusive growth agenda. Effective policy measures can therefore play a vital role in unlocking the full potential of cycling tourism across Europe.

Policy recommendations

Integrating Cycle Tourism into National Strategies and Action Plans and Developing a National Strategy for Cycle Tourism

Realizing the full potential of cycle tourism requires strategic policy and long-term investment in route development, signage, maintenance, services, research, and marketing. To ensure a coordinated and effective approach, cycle tourism should be included as a distinct element in national strategies and action plans.

However, cycle tourism progress requires broader collaboration between stakeholders. National cycle tourism strategies would provide clear direction, define roles and responsibilities, and align shared objectives—enabling more coordinated and impactful development efforts. The strategies should be developed and monitored. The strategy should have clear, data-based steps for implementation and monitoring. E.g. installing cycle calculators on cycle tourism routes would help monitoring the amount of tourists on a certain route and effects of development measures.

Developing a National Cycling Route Network

There is a need for a clear and comprehensive national route network that links cities, rural areas, and nature destinations. Route safety, signage, and accessibility of route information must be improved to ensure a high-quality cycling experience for both domestic and international visitors. EuroVelo routes can work as a standard for the national cycling tourism network and the aim should be to reach the “Developed route” level for all national EuroVelo routes, as well as other national long-distance routes. This would entail infrastructural enhancement as well as development of cyclists-friendly services along the route.

Cross-departmental and international cooperation

Identifying and engaging route stakeholders cooperation network is essential to secure development, maintenance and financing cycling tourism. This entails both national and international cooperation to secure the quality of the European-wide EuroVelo network to benefit all countries. Each country should set up a National EuroVelo Coordination Centers or Coordinators in every country for joint coordination.

The international cooperation should also enhance the marketing and promotion of cycling tourism in interconnected regions, e.g. at the Baltic Sea on EuroVelo 10 route. Sustainable multimodal connections exists already to support international cycle tourism.

Key route stakeholders for cycle tourism development and cross-departmental cooperation:

- National administration bodies (e.g., Ministry/Department of Tourism)
- Regional administration bodies (e.g., County Government level)
- NECCs (National EuroVelo Coordination Centres), when established.
- Local authorities responsible for regional development planning.
- Tourism organizations and relevant transportation companies (ferry operators, international bus lines)
- Non-governmental organizations (NGOs, e.g. cycling advocacy organizations)
- Local/regional tourism associations interested in developing cycling tourism products or services

United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal

Supporting the development of cycle tourism contributes to several of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals for 2030, including:

3 – Good Health and Well-being

8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth

10 – Reduced Inequalities

11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities

12 – Responsible Consumption and Production

13 – Climate Action



More information and references

1. **Practical Information and FAQ - EuroVelo**
[EuroVelo FAQ](#)
2. **Baltic Sea Cycle Route Development Strategy 2020-2030**
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3. **Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP)**
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1. **European Declaration on Cycling, European Commission, 2023**
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2. **Pan-European Master Plan for Cycling Promotion, UNECE and WHO, 2021**
[Pan-European Master Plan for Cycling Promotion](#)
3. **EuroVelo Network, European Cyclists' Federation**
[EuroVelo Network](#)
4. **EU and National Policy Objectives for Cycling Tourism**
[EU Cycling Strategy](#)
5. **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030**
[UN Sustainable Development Goals](#)