

Danube Cycle Plans

Guideline on how to set up a national cycling plan



<http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/danube-cycle-plans>

PP Partnership for Urban Mobility

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for more people cycling in the Danube region

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More information about Danube Cycle Plans

and the project activities & results are available on:
<http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/danube-cycle-plans>

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0. Prologue



I was charged to implement the **output T.1.2. Guideline for the Development/Update of National Cycling Plans (NCPs)** in the Danube Cycle Plan project. Here is the assignment: *the document shall provide guidance for partners and other interested stakeholders through the preparation, development, adoption and implementation phase of the NCPs. Together with the Danube Cycling Strategy, this guideline ensures that the development of the NCPs follows a common transnational approach.*

I have been wondering about how to approach the task for more than three months. What I want is not to copy the existing sources, but to find my own added value. And then I thought of the ETA¹ research programme which has been implemented in the Czech Republic, with an aim to interconnect technical sciences with social ones and humanities. And I would like to apply exactly this approach.

The guideline will be based on specific recommendations, databases, technical texts, research projects, experience, and other interesting information. Although these are valuable facts and every project partner will choose those useful and beneficial for their country, do you think this is enough? Definitely NOT.

We all will have well prepared National Cycling Strategies at our disposal by December 2022. But does that really mean something? I remember July 12, 2004 (incidentally my birthday) when the first Czech National Cycling Strategy was approved and an official came to me and asked: *"So, you do have it, and what will you do with it?"* And I have realized that the mere existence of a document means nothing. You should expect that at the end of your project, a similar person will come and ask similar question, you should expect that there are lots of people in every country who do not care about cycling at all.

The above words are not to throw you in disillusion, I do not want you to think that there's no point in our efforts. On the contrary, I wish you realize that the cycling strategy was developed for you and your colleagues. And try to imagine that you can inspire other people and together you are looking forward to the implementation process, which is ahead of you. Of course, these are emotions, but they also do belong in the process. It is exactly as in the fairy tale about the waters of life and death - we need to complement the cycling strategy with an added value so that it could work. You need to gain the trust; people must see you mean it! It is better sometimes to forget uniformity and be yourself.

¹ <https://www.tacr.cz/en/>

The Guideline can help us all to enliven the lifeless document. We are all in the process, both your countries, and ours, still working on the transformation of the car culture into an active and sustainable mobility culture.

This prologue aims to reveal some of my ideas, my way of thinking, what it means "to be yourself" in my case. I hope you will be encouraged.

And it is not just about me. I dare to express my personal experience because whatever I say I know it expresses opinions of my friend Peter Klučka, the National Cycling Coordinator in Slovakia. Therefore, here is a space for him to tell us something: *"Dear fans of two-wheeled mobility, let me join you in the miscellaneous cycling peloton. Although me and Jarda "ride our bikes" on the opposite banks of the Morava River, we have known each other for many years and we have at least one thing in common, and that's perseverance. Not only as marathon runners, but as people first and foremost who aim together side by side to the finish line, encouraging one another. And in their movement, they know that the finish tape cannot be torn right after the start, that you need to distribute your forces throughout the track and get ready for every possible barrier. And moreover, you should warn your colleague of unexpected twists awaiting on the track. Dear friends, I'm looking forward to our Easy Ride together!"*

And I could continue like this, because with my intuition I feel that I think the same as Martin Eder, the Austrian National Cycling Coordinator, or Gregor Steklačič, the Slovenian National Cycling Coordinator. I have not had a chance and honour yet to meet the others informally, like we say in the CR, at a beer, but I guess we can create a strong team which will succeed and change mobility in our countries.

You might better understand in this context why I want to present the ways I used to open cycling conferences. Whatever we will do, should have an added value, a piece of ourselves:

- The first large National Cycling Conference was introduced with a quote from the Bible, Ecclesiastes 9,11: "I have seen something else under the sun: „*The race is not to the swift or the battle to the strong, nor does food come to the wise or wealth to the brilliant or favor to the learned; but time and chance happen to them all.*" (NIV) As the conference moderator I said: *"Our knowledge, experience, information gained, this is not enough without appropriate time and opportunities. And the time has come, let us use it right now."* That is when the journey has begun to support cycling differently.
- In 2015, I used song Beautiful Day by U2²; what was the point? We should approach the SUMP process not only as experts and use the technical point of view, but as human beings first and foremost, using human dimension too. There was a technical document introduced during the conference and was presented by eight faculties of the Palacky University Olomouc, including the Faculties of Medicine, of Philosophy and of Theology.

² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=co6WMzDOh1o>

- In 2016, I used song Zahradní slavnost (Garden Party) by Citron (a Czech group)³; and the point was? There are two perspectives how to look at the partner organizations - we can see them either as people who were chosen to represent their organizations, or as people who care, who are interested!
- In 2017, I used song Hey, you by Pink Floyd⁴. Have we already forgotten the message from Saint Exupery's Little Prince? Have we forgotten that the most important things are invisible to human eyes? This is what the first presentation talked about; students from the town of Cesky Brod were singing a song by Pink Floyd, and called on participants to "take us seriously, it's about our future".
- In 2018, I used song The Sound of Silence by Simon & Garfunkel⁵, with the point that we know the whole theory about Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans, but still they fail in practice. As the song says "Hello darkness, ... And in the naked light, I saw/ Ten thousand people, maybe more/ People talking without speaking/ People hearing without listening".
- In 2019, I used the song Vodá má (Water has got) by Hradistan (a Czech group)⁶ with the following point: We have forgotten our roots and the context. Water is a symbol of life, what we will do when it is lost? Solving issues of urban mobility and cycling is just a drop in the ocean, but when we are able to see small troubles, it is easier for us to recognize that there are serious issues to solve.
- In 2020, I used the song Eko Echo by TataBojs⁷. The lyrics does not need any comments provided: "Our planet is angry with us, we don't know what the revenge is yet, we don't know what the global scorcher is yet... There is no Plan B, and we keep denying it..."

I recommend you play the songs even though some of them are in Czech. All of them generate certain emotions. Let us not forget that Cycling Plan has a human dimension too. Theory might be well-done, but it is real practice what counts. Towns and cities of today must face many challenges, and it can be difficult to meet the needs of various neighbourhoods and the city as a whole. Quite often we must decide whether to provide new car parking spaces, or cycle lanes instead. Is it just me who see a more philosophical question than the technical one? In my book, it is our priorities what makes the decision.

I like the short movie Human Dimension⁸ very much, because of how it addresses the question of our cities: Although modern and magnificent, are they good places to live? The visionary Danish architect Jan Gehl and his colleagues try to present cities as places of togetherness and closeness in

³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uPZEPYAESg>

⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yzx2eIXu5so>

⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NAEppFUWLfc>

⁶ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EbU8G_iIK

⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wyhc3CQc1U4>

⁸ <https://www.aerofilms.cz/lidsky-rozmer/>

the movie. They want more space for pedestrians and cyclists and bring life back to street space. What if this idea becomes the basis for our Cycling Plans?

We should also remember that we live in the era which is defined by Covid-19. We are all aware of the chaos it caused in our lives. Many of our previous habits were broken down and need to be transformed. Should this not affect the preparation of the Cycling plan too? This document needs to be approached in the context of our time - everything changes, nothing will be as it was. Regardless of any cycling plan, bicycles are currently sold like never before. One of my friends works in a bike shop, and he says: "Today, you don't have to waste money on marketing to make people ride a bike. Build cycleways and they will cycle, and many of them. Lots of people dislike wearing a mask, so they start cycling, lots of people are afraid of traveling by bus or tram, so they start cycling, etc. Before the crisis, I ordered bicycles for my shop and had them in stock within six months. Now, everything is sold out, I must wait for one year and be glad to get them. When will our politicians realize the fact? The world has changed, but they have not noticed yet." All you can hear or see in any news in the CR is that the current situation jeopardizes world's car industry. But you do not hear a word about another industry, the cycling industry, starting to develop intensively.

So? Are we able and willing to build our cycling plan/strategy on both knowledge, and emotions?

1. Introduction

It is not that we would not like cycling or that the work done so far would not be helpful. On the contrary, it is a fact that both professional and lay public are constantly moving forward (or - mostly forward), which is reflected in methodological approaches too. Unfortunately, compared to the Western countries, post-communist countries have always been behind in the field of cycling. Moreover, copying others can work only to a certain extent. It is essential to define properly cultural, historical and other differences to be able to replicate what can really work in our country. And this is the sticking point, because although having effective tools to support cycling, we have forgotten to find our weaknesses. Communication skills have their imperfections in most post-communist countries, although the level of communication of support for cycling affects lives of all citizens for further decades on, and it is highly important for the process of the development of a national cycling plan/strategy how the information is conveyed and received. However, the document (the national cycling plan/strategy) itself, although being well elaborated, has no power to solve out our problems, it is just the first step on the challenging and never-ending journey. Despite more minor shortcomings in our approach, the most important thing is to understand what the purpose of the cycling plan/strategy is and how to make full use of it.

Not the procedure, but the approach is what the cycling plan/strategy is primarily about - to show the way and the goal. Once we know what we are heading for and why, it is almost easy to move forward, step by step, slowly but sure-footed. There is a power in simplicity - the cycling plan/strategy does not have to cover every detail necessarily, but it must clearly answer fundamental questions. And it should be highlighted again that the cycling plan/strategy is where the whole process starts, not finishes. Since the world and our lives are changing constantly, and evolving, the plan/strategy should be able to respond, to be flexible, to remain unlocked. When the goal and the direction (the vision) are clearly set, the details can be variable and adaptable to changing or country-specific conditions. Simplicity and flexibility are the key qualities.

Political responsibilities are the key elements of the process and require much more attention to be paid. The same applies to the communication which just cannot be reduced to a website, or to several awareness raising campaigns.

The plan/strategy is not a cookbook full of recipes, it presents a method and an approach to the issue. The main challenge in the cycling plan/strategy implementation process is to adapt the concept to country-specific conditions, while keep all the ambition and avoid inappropriate compromises. The cycling plan/strategy is not just about planning cycling, it puts humans and their needs in the centre of our attention, it focuses on our lifestyle which significantly affects the climate, energy efficiency, environment and, ultimately, public health too.

Basic questions are the same: How to develop/update your national cycling plan/strategy, how to enhance funding for cycling development, etc.?

The guideline is looking for answers at three levels:

1. How to come up with the strategic background for the promotion of cycling?

For establishing the strategic framework the methodical guide "How to develop strategic documents" published by the Czech Regional Development Ministry should be helpful. It was elaborated as a tool for the other ministries and was approved by the Czech Government.

- ⇒ For further details please check Typology - a methodological recommendation from the Ministry of Regional Development the Czech Republic (see Annex).

2. Which actions are needed to achieve the objectives defined in the strategy?

The pan-European Master Plan for Cycling Promotion provides a collection of recommendations for countries of the pan-European Region that could act as a toolbox of possible actions for cycling promotion. However, the aim is not just to copy the recommendations, but to select those which are most suitable for your country (based on the findings of your status quo analysis in T.1.3.) and include clear responsibilities, deadlines, necessary resources etc. By doing that you are transforming a recommendation to a specific task which means that someone is responsible for it, there is a deadline for the implementation and the financial resources have been secured.

3. How can the required resources be secured?

The resources are an often underestimated and overlooked part of a cycling plan/strategy. However, it is highly important to appoint a coordinator with a team, as well as the marketing manager, to define the funds allocated for marketing or for the cycling infrastructure and to decide who is responsible for project data. For more details check chapter 3.

The terms national cycling plan and national cycling strategy were used synonymously in the prologue and this introduction as well as in the application form of the Danube Cycle Plans project. In the following we decided to use the term **national cycling strategy** or just **cycling strategy** for the document we would like to come up with at the end of this process.

1.1. PROCESS OF DEVELOPING A CYCLING STRATEGY

"Don't tell me what your priorities are, just show me how you spend your money, and I'll tell you." James W. Frick

This chapter outlines **specific steps and procedures in the process of the cycling strategy development**. The process can be **divided into seven stages** which further describe specific activities and steps to develop the strategy. The different stages, activities and steps do not follow one after another in a timeline as described, but with time loops, of course.

Process of the development of a strategic document and its stages:

- **The mission** - it begins with a political decision (see Step 1).
- **The preparation** of the cycling strategy is linked to the establishment of the National Cycling Working Group (see Step 2).
- **The analysis** (see Step 3).
- **The vision and strategic goals** - setting the strategic direction of the cycling strategy (see Step 4).
- **The specific objectives and recommendations** (see Step 5).
- **The action plan** - this stage aims to get a detailed implementation plan for the cycling strategy as a basic condition for successful implementation (see Step 6).
- **The implementation** - Approval of the cycling strategy and implementation, funding and evaluation of the cycling strategy (see Step 7).



More details regarding these seven steps are provided in chapter 2.

1.2. PLANNING PRINCIPLES

Strategic planning is a basic element for the cycling strategy; it includes a vision, strategic goals, specific objectives, and actions linked to stakeholders. Planning processes usually use similar types of data or tools, and require participation of similar stakeholders, no matter what the specifications of the planning process are. And vice versa, planning processes differ in a time schedule, in requirements for planning and for reporting, as well as in geographical scope and responsible authorities. In a nutshell, planning process is always to choose one of the many possible visions of the future.

The authors of the cycling strategy **should take the following principles into account** during the development and implementation of the document:

1. The preparation of the cycling strategy is a **transparent and objective** process that includes a wide range of stakeholders (e.g. entities which will be able to implement actions and activities based on the newly developed cycling strategy, as well as entities whose problems are to be solved through the document).
2. Both form and quality of the new cycling strategy must enable the approval authority to make an **informed and responsible** decision.
3. A cycling strategy aims to change an **approach to mobility and transport planning**.
4. A cycling strategy is **not an isolated document**, during the preparation process, strategic work is **coordinated both at vertical, and horizontal levels** (e.g. the strategy is prepared in relation to strategic documents that have been developed at both higher and lower levels of the public administration, inc. the EU strategic framework). In addition, time continuity and consistency are considered.
5. **Funding and financing** of the cycling strategy implementation is **clearly defined**, and it is regularly reflected in a state, regions and cities budget.
6. A cycling strategy is being developed based on identified and real needs of users whose problems will be solved through it. A cycling strategy is an **evidence-based** document, with an **evaluation of expected and real benefits and impacts** (the economic, social and environmental ones at least).
7. The **link** between the national cycling strategy and the **other responsible administrative levels** (regional, local) must be considered.

8. cycling strategy **includes specific and targeted recommendations and an action plan** that clearly **defines responsibilities** for reaching set objectives, as well as **implementation structure** and processes, sets indicators to measure progress and success.
9. cycling strategy **needs to have a responsible person** (see step 1) to take charge of the strategy, the implementation, meeting objectives and targets, and expected benefits.
10. There must be a **continuous checking** to actions implemented and their effectiveness, followed by corrective mechanisms if needed be.
11. cycling strategy should **delegate implementation responsibilities and decision** making to **regional and local authorities** whenever it is possible and appropriate.

1.3. GETTING STARTED

Before the process of developing the national cycling strategy starts, it is recommended to be aware of the following questions that will help to get a more specific idea about with the questions that lay ahead of you when thinking about developing a cycling strategy. At the end of the day the cycling strategy should provide answers to all of these questions.

- **Why** do we need to have a cycling strategy?
- **What** problems will the cycling strategy solve and in what value context (based on what criteria)?
- **How** will the problem be solved (if at all)?
- **What** is the target for the cycling strategy, the required state after the implementation is completed?
- **Who** are the cycling strategy target groups?
- **What** are the possible effects and impacts of the cycling strategy?
- **When** a problem will be solved and when the process will be completed? (for example: safety, environmental, health issues)
- **Who** will solve the problem?
- **How long** is the valid time of the document?
- **How much** will the implementation of actions cost, what will be the necessary resources (financial, human and organizational ones) and who will provide them?

2. The seven steps

Step 1) The mission

The cycling strategy needs to have its own ambassador (e.g. the relevant Minister) who will fight for it in a good way. To have a cycling strategy is good for a country just in case the document is linked to specific actions and financial resources. Otherwise, only a set of recommendations remains which everyone can find on the internet.

The ambassador does not have to be a politician responsible for the field of transport. To identify the right person relates to the specifics of the Government, and to where the cycling issue belongs to. It can be either the Ministry of Regional Development, or the Ministry of Transport, of the Environment, of Health. In any case, political involvement is a necessary condition to effective cycling strategy implementation.

What if there is no such a politician in your country? Just be patient, someone will emerge during the preparation or implementation process. In the meantime, you can refer to superior documents, either national or European ones, which advocate the development of the cycling strategy.

e.g. you can also refer to objective d of the Pan-European Master Plan for Cycling Promotion:

To develop and implement national cycling policies, supported by national cycling plans, strategies and programmes including the setting of national targets in every country in the region;

as well as to Recommendation 1.1 of the Pan-European Master Plan for Cycling Promotion:

Develop (and/or update) and implement a national cycling plan: „A national cycling plan provides a framework for the promotion of cycling at the national level. The plan and its objectives and recommendations should reflect the country’s characteristics and include cycling policies and strategies. National authorities should coordinate, monitor and update implementation of the plan and ensure the involvement of all relevant stakeholders at the regional and local levels.”

Step 2) The preparation

The National Cycling Working Group (NCWG) for the cycling strategy development should be established with representatives of ministries and of active lay and professional public. In addition, it is required to define a role of the cycling coordinator, which a public and respected figure should be to strive for fundamental changes in the image of cycling. He or she will be responsible for communicating with ministries, with regional authorities and other stakeholders, as well as with the public. The cycling coordinator would ideally be an employee of a ministry but could also be an external.

Each relevant ministry needs to know what their links to the cycling strategy are and how to help the cycling coordinator to implement the actions. For example, the Education Ministry is involved in the following activities: 1) children participation in the transformation of their country, their region, their city; 2) establishing positive attitude towards walking, cycling and other physical activities; 3) creating a safe environment in the vicinity of schools (e.g. school streets), incl. bike storages and bike racks. These are several model links for the ministries to establish with the cycling strategy.

cycling strategy preparation process should start with defining organizational structures and responsibilities, not with analyses. Ideally, a National Cycling Coordinator is appointed in this stage to coordinate monitoring and communication works with other departments and organizations responsible for specific tasks.

This phase corresponds to the Recommendation 1.2 of the Pan-European master plan for cycling promotion - **Create strong cycling working groups and appoint a national cycling officer:** *“Contacts and regular exchange of ideas between stakeholders at the local, regional and national levels and between the transport, health, environment and economic sectors should be ensured in order to improve understanding of cycling needs and requirements. Countries should establish a national cycling officer (for countries that are just beginning to promote cycling) or a national cycling competence centre (for countries with longer experience). The officer/competence centre should ideally be supported by all relevant ministries and should have a specific mandate and a clear profile or description. The officer or the director of the competence centre ideally should spend 100 per cent of his or her working time on cycling issues, have a strong technical competence, be empowered to reach out to a variety of stakeholders, play a coordinating and enabling role, be committed to and enthusiastic about cycling and cycle on a regular basis.”*

This NCWG first creates the cycling strategy (see step 3 - 6) and then monitors the implementation of it (step 7). You can read more about the working group in chapter 3.1. Human resources.

Step 3) The analysis

All relevant data, information and knowledge regarding cycling in your country will be gathered in the analytical phase. The relevant data is not only statistical data, but also administrative and expert

data and those obtained from the stakeholders. In addition, the existing national and European strategic documents need to be subject to analysis.

Description of the current status must include a description of the national cycling culture, of social standards, and set the amount of investment in cycling. It often happens that cycling is already addressed by strategies, plans and concepts, but the amount of investment and priority for cycling compared to other policy areas is not sufficient or even neglectable. This can be proved by data as well.

The analysis part of the guideline will not be expanded in more details as this will be done in two other activities of the Danube Cycle Plans project. For that please check:

- The **Status Quo Questionnaire** elaborated and prepared in activity A.T1.2
- The **self-assessment methodology** developed and implemented in activity A.T1.2

The results of the status quo questionnaire and the self-assessment will provide the basis for the elaboration of the next steps of your national cycling strategy.

Step 4) The vision and strategic goals

The first phase starts with a statement that the cycling strategy needs to have an ambassador. It is specified in this step what it exactly means. There are the stakeholders with a vision, but also with abilities and opportunities to bring the vision to life. While the first phase was more about a mission, this phase focuses on a vision which, written in cold print, expresses joint efforts of the team (see Step 2) towards transformation.



The vision of the Danube Cycle Plan can be an inspiration:

"More people cycling in the Danube Region".

The vision needs to be specified from the perspective of the participating countries as well as their cities and regions - the key stakeholders for achieving the vision.

The vision needs to be compared with the following questions: "**What country do we want to live in? What are our priorities? Are we able to implement the vision in the near future?**" To answer the questions, you need to analyze the current status of cycling (status quo questionnaire and self-assessment), discuss it with your NCWG and the obtained findings must be compared to the best European strategic documents for mobility development.

Regarding its vision, the Pan-European Master Plan for Cycling Promotion states:

Our vision is to promote cycling, which will contribute to sustainable livelihoods, a better environment, improved health and safety, greater social inclusion and economic prosperity, and overall improvement in the quality of life of our citizens. To that end, we acknowledge cycling as an equal mode of transport and have developed this pan-European Master Plan for Cycling Promotion.



Besides the vision you need to define **strategic goals** for your national cycling strategy. **Goals are big, bold, broad, and ambitious aims.**

For goals, the literature uses the acronym MASSIVE to remind us that goals are supposed to be:

- M means **Meaningful**: A meaningful goal is one that helps you fulfill your purpose, is driven by your passions, and is based on your principles and policies.
- A means **Aligned**: Goals must be aligned to more than one aspect of life (emotional, spiritual, mental, familial, recreational, physical, spatial, social, political, and professional).
- S means **Spanning**: Your goals must propel you into the future; if you are not setting goals that are at least 10 years out, you're thinking too short term.

- S means **Significant**: Significant goals are life-changing and designed to transform you from who you are today into the person you want to be tomorrow.
- I mean **Inspirational**: Inspirational goals are big, bold, and daring; they're dream-worthy and feel out of reach and uncomfortable.
- V means **Valuable**: Valuable goals create outcomes that add value to your life, the life of your family and friends, and the greater community around you.
- E means **Exact**: A clear and concise goal must be stated in a single sentence and convey each of the other characteristics mentioned above.

Examples of strategic goals are:

- Increasing the modal share of cycling;
- Reducing car use and modal share of cars;
- Reducing number of road accidents with cyclists.

For each strategic goal performance or impact indicators need to be defined. E.g. the performance indicator for increasing the modal share of cycling would be the modal split (number of trips carried out with the different modes of transport), for reducing the number of road accidents with cyclists it could be the number of cyclists killed in road accidents.

The goals of increasing numbers of cyclists or cyclists' safety support a vision of having more people cycling in the Danube region. These goals also support the holistic approach of national cycling strategy: the goals on increasing public health (health sector), reducing the emissions (environment sector), job creation by bicycle industry or cycling tourism (economic sector). Defining a common vision and setting strategic goals - these are the cornerstones of not only your national cycling strategy, but of every strategy.

Step 5) The specific objectives and recommendations



This phase aims to elaborate the cycling strategy in specific objectives and recommendations which will meet the SMART principles (Specific, Measurable, Affordable, Realistic and Time-achievable).

An **objective** is more specific than a strategic goal, relates to a set of necessary actions on the one hand and specifies strategic goals set on the other hand. It happens that one specific objective is related to more than one strategic goal and vice-versa. Indicators for evaluating objectives and for monitoring action implementation are output indicators. Examples for specific objectives can be found in the pan-European Master Plan for Cycling Promotion:

- DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING NATIONAL CYCLING POLICIES SUPPORTED BY A NATIONAL CYCLING PLAN
- IMPROVING REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR CYCLING PROMOTION
- PROVIDING USER FRIENDLY CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE
- PROVIDING SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENTS AND EFFICIENT FUNDING MECHANISMS
- INCLUDING CYCLING IN THE PLANNING PROCESSES AND FACILITATING MULTIMODALITY
- PROMOTING CYCLING THROUGH INCENTIVES AND MOBILITY MANAGEMENT
- IMPROVING HEALTH AND SAFETY
- IMPROVING CYCLING STATISTICS FOR EFFICIENT MONITORING AND BENCHMARKING
- DEVELOPING CYCLING TOURISM
- MAKING USE OF NEW TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION
- PROMOTE CYCLING FOR A MORE RESILIENT TRANSPORT SYSTEM

Examples for recommendations corresponding with the specific objectives can be found in the pan-European Master Plan for Cycling promotion:

1	DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING NATIONAL CYCLING POLICIES SUPPORTED BY A NATIONAL CYCLING PLAN
1.1	Developing (and/or up-date) and implementing a national cycling plan
1.2	Creating strong "cycling working groups" & appointing a National Cycling Officer
1.3	Establishing a National Knowledge Centre / "Bike Academy" for training of professionals and skill-enhancement
2	IMPROVING REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR CYCLING PROMOTION
2.1	Considering cycle-friendly regulations in traffic law and guidance documents
2.2	Providing cycling friendly traffic conditions
2.3	Improving and harmonising vehicle (equipment) specifications
3	PROVIDING USER FRIENDLY CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE
3.1	Defining and developing further a methodology and monitoring the implementation of a trans-European cycling network
3.2	Coordinating creation and maintenance of trans-European, national, regional and local cycling route networks
3.3	Standardisation of cycling infrastructure
4	PROVIDING SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENTS AND EFFICIENT FUNDING MECHANISMS
4.1	Setting up sustainable national funding schemes to promote cycling
4.2	Establishing close cooperation with International Financial Institutions (IFIs) to ensure funding of cycling infrastructure for cycling infrastructure investment plans
4.3	Considering impact of cycling in investment decisions
5	INCLUDING CYCLING IN THE PLANNING PROCESSES AND FACILITATING MULTIMODALITY
5.1	Incorporating cycling in all infrastructure planning
5.2	Considering cycling in spatial planning and building regulations
5.3	Facilitating multimodality between cycling, public transport and walking
6	PROMOTING CYCLING THROUGH INCENTIVES AND MOBILITY MANAGEMENT
6.1	Introducing fiscal incentives to promote cycling
6.2	Financial support for bikes (e.g. electric/cargo) for communities, companies and consumers
6.3	Promoting the use of cycling through Mobility Management
7	IMPROVING HEALTH AND SAFETY
7.1	Strengthen awareness and capacities of health professionals to use and advocate cycling as a tool to promote physical activity and improve public health
7.2	Integrating health and cycling related aspects in formal and informal education as well as in awareness raising
7.3	Integrating cycling in road safety policies
8	IMPROVING CYCLING STATISTICS FOR EFFICIENT MONITORING AND BENCHMARKING
8.1	Providing adequate and reliable statistical data to monitor the level of cycling
8.2	Supporting countries in collecting coherent & comparable data on international level
8.3	Highlighting the benefits of cycling by developing and applying common tools
9	DEVELOPING CYCLING TOURISM
9.1	Establishing national cycling tourism coordination centres
9.2	Introducing a national cycle friendly service scheme
9.3	Adopting and implementing a national guideline for signalisation of cycle route networks
10	MAKING USE OF NEW TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION
10.1	Introducing open standards for data exchange
10.2	Using smart data to improve cycling conditions
10.3	Supporting innovative bike-vehicles for the last mile logistics
11	PROMOTE CYCLING FOR A MORE RESILIENT TRANSPORT SYSTEM
11.1	Redistribute road space fairly among all road users
11.2	Optimizing public spaces and making them attractive and enjoyable
11.3	Integrate cycling into recovery and resilience plans

For each specific objective one or more output **indicators** need to be defined. These indicators offer the possibility to monitor the progress in implementing the cycling strategy. By adding concrete target values for the single indicators not only progress but also success can be monitored. Examples for output indicators are:

- Specific objective: Improving the regulatory framework for cycling promotion → **Output indicator: Number of new cycle-friendly regulations included in traffic laws**

- Specific objective: Providing user-friendly cycling infrastructure → **Output indicator 1: The number of kilometers of adequate cycle infrastructure,**

Step 6) The action plan

This stage aims to get a **detailed action plan** for the cycling strategy as a basic condition for a focused and successful implementation.

In order to come up with a complete list of actions it is necessary to compare the strategic goals and the specific objectives with the current status of cycling in your country. By identifying the gap between the current status and the status that you would like to achieve in the future, the necessary actions should be obvious.

Where to start? How did others deal with this issue?

For inspiration you can have a close look at the **recommendations provided in the pan-European Master Plan for Cycling Promotion**. The information collected there as well as the examples provide in the **toolbox of best available practices** will be a great source of inspiration to find suitable solutions for the challenges you are facing. As third source of inspiration are already **existing national cycling strategies** as they were collected by THE PEP partnership on cycling.

To facilitate a successful implementation, the action plan should consist of two parts:

- 1) A more **general part** with a short description and the most important information regarding the responsible institution, the time horizon for implementation, the current status and the estimated overall costs. Each action should provide a clear link to the corresponding specific objective(s).
- 2) **Detailed description of the different tasks** necessary to implement the action. The information provided for each task should be more detailed and concrete for those to be implemented in the first years (1-3 years) whereas they can be more general when it comes to tasks targeting at a more distant future (3-5 years / 5-10 years).

The description should ideally also include links to other politics, a link to funding resources (see also chapter important resources – financial resources)

This is how the description of the actions and the corresponding tasks could look like in the action plan:

Action: #####		specific objective ###			
description					
Main responsible		Implementation status:			
overall horizon implementation		Overall costs: - €			
No.	Task	Stakeholders to be involved	year of implementation	costs	status
1.1	###				
1.2	###				
1.3	###				

Step 7) The implementation

This stage aims to get an approval for the developed cycling strategy including the action plan. The whole process of the strategy development is completed and closed when the strategy is approved. The implementation process mainly builds up on the action plan of the cycling strategy. In the broadest context, implementation is the process of translating theory into practice, with three parallel groups of activities:

- 1) Implementation (the process of action implementation),
- 2) Feedback (continuous monitoring and evaluation of the implementation process, proposals for improvements, if necessary),
- 3) Continuous raising of awareness and publicity (continuously providing information about the strategy and the implementation process).

The implementation of the cycling strategy is a process of ongoing optimization - it is impossible to deliver an optimized scheme just at once; it is a long-term process that influences the activities planned even for a more distant future. Every strategy requires to have continuous monitoring, the results of which are valuable data used for the future development.

This stage aims to determine NEW problems and challenges relating to cycling occurring / popping up during the implementation phase of the cycling strategy, to summarize knowledge base, to understand problems more in detail, and then to transfer lessons learnt into the continuing implementation of the cycling strategy. This stage focusses on collecting NEW relevant data, information and knowledge, with the aim to determine and understand the issue, and to examine

effectiveness or ineffectiveness of current and previous solutions. Statistical, administrative and expert data is not the only relevant data, but also data gathered from stakeholders. Analytic activities are cross-sectional and can be conducted in the following stages as well.

Implementation is definitely the most challenging period in the whole process. To successfully implement a cycling strategy, having well-developed guidelines and recommendations is not enough without a strong team, adequate funds and necessary data. Good practice examples from different countries could easily describe how everything is working well, but! There are many things that have failed and cannot be considered as a success. Most of the people do not want to talk about these failures. Here is a current example from the Czech Republic. Last week, there were funds allocated from EU funds for cycling promotion; despite an official letter from 14 regions to the Czech Transport Minister with an appeal for EUR 100 million allocated from the National Recovery and Resilience Plan to cycling development, only EUR 22 million were released. Why is that? Priorities of the Czech Transport Ministry are different. The good news is that this was a linking moment for the Czech regions which will continue to strive for a quality implementation of the new Czech cycling strategy. The above words bring us to the last chapter. cycling strategy needs to be well prepared on the paper, but the success in practice depends on available resources – **human resources**/people who are able and willing to implement the actions defined in the strategy. Also, it depends on available **financial resources** which must help to meet the ambitious targets and vision. And the third item required to reach a successful implementation is **data** - and not only data in the analytical section. Data can be immensely powerful in providing facts about why it is beneficial to allocate more funds to cycling development, as well as in giving basis for the working team's self-confidence (the team members will now their work is based on facts, not on pious wishes).

This is the context for the following chapter.

3. Important Resources

Tools are the fundamentals of every cycling strategy:

- **Human resources** emphasize the fact that nothing can be done without adequate manpower.
- **Financial resources** emphasize the fact that nothing can be done without the necessary money. Provide sustainable investment and efficient funding mechanisms.
- **Data resources** - points out the importance of having quality data available, which can help break many walls of misunderstanding and to generate support for the promotion of cycling.

3.1. HUMAN RESOURCES

The need to create the National cycling working group (NCWG) is already discussed in step 2, as part of the elaboration of the cycling strategy. This NCWG could/should also be the forum to monitor the implementation of the national cycling strategy (see step 7).

Besides establishing strong cycling working groups appointing a national cycling officer the following steps are crucial:

- Linking the activities of the authorities at different levels (municipalities, regions etc.) according to their competence
- The number of stakeholders involved in the implementation of the cycling strategy (state institutions, schools, universities, main employers, civil society representatives, urban planners, etc.)

Therefore, **working groups and stakeholders must be established with great caution, as well as the planning framework must be developed**, with the aim to define an organizational structure and necessary steps that will ensure viability of action implementation.

The following four basic groups should be represented in the National Cycling Working group:

- **Internal group at a ministry (ministries)**, Links and tasks in the process of developing the cycling strategy must be defined for every action, together with available funds.
- **Interdisciplinary working group** with external organizations (e.g. police, chamber of commerce, representatives of regions and cities) as members dealing somehow with

cycling (and sometimes not even knowing about it). It is vital to get their support and assistance in the preparation and implementation of measures.

- **Citizens** must have a voice in the NCWG. In many cases they are represented through NGOs like cycling advocacy groups.

For the organizational framework, the following issues need to be specified:

- Fields of expertise that either directly or indirectly affect cycling and therefore should be taken into consideration (e.g. health, environment etc. are obvious but it might be necessary to include the education sector or the departments responsible for spatial planning).
- Time frame: How long will the elaboration phase for the cycling strategy take?
- Range of services outsourced: It is necessary to find out what the administrative bodies can provide with own resources and what must be outsourced. Outsourcing is recommended for the following activities:
 - analyzing the current status of mobility, including data collection;
 - elaborating sector documents;
 - developing a communication plan, and delivering marketing services for campaigns and communication with the public;
 - delivering preparation, organizational and promotional service for various events, recording and analyzing outputs that will arise from participation of the public and stakeholders;
 - training on specific activities, legal advice.

Our introductory recommendation for the Danube Cycle Plan project team

Organisational tools in the Danube Cycle Plan (DCP) project are associated with the establishment of the National Cycling Working Groups (NCWGs). NCWG will meet 5 times within the project and the meetings will result in new National Cycling Strategies. However, this will be just the beginning of the process. NCWG needs to be transformed in an effective working group which will be responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the cycling strategy.

NCWGs were established within the project (see Activity A.T1.2.) in every participating country. The members of the NCWGs are bearers of the project vision. The working group will meet at least 5 times during the project to address the following topics: financing/investments, vision/objectives, cycling route networks and infrastructure standards, action plans. It is however important for the group to be coming back to the basic vision of Danube Cycling Strategy repeatedly: „**More people**

cycling in the Danube region". These five NCWG meetings define phasing for the preparation of the Cycling Plan.

- Since the first meeting has already taken place, it was impossible to reflect recommendations of this Guideline in the first meeting outputs. No problem, because every participant had enough time and space to define the status quo in their country, or also to answer the question *"Why does our country need a Cycling Plan?"*.
- At the second meeting, every participant can compare their ideas with the recommendations in this Guideline, and subsequently specify their visions and objectives. **„More people cycling in the Danube region"** is just a direction indicator; every meeting aims to compare objectives with the reality. And it is up to each of the project partners to specify their vision and the direction required for the development of the cycling support. And what could help? Answers to four questions that are basic for the development of the cycling strategy: Analysis, or what basic information do we need to know? What are the fundamentals of every Cycling Plan? What is the Cycling Plan to deliver? How will people see it in urban areas and in the countryside? Will the Cycling Plan kick off change people's perceptions and approaches towards cycling? Will it change the framework conditions in a way that more people to ride bikes, both in everyday journeys and in their leisure time? **The second meeting will be organized back-to-back with the first workshop of the BYPAD assessment. Introduction of questionnaire + go into details for some selected questions in order to give the members of the evaluation group a clear picture of what is expected from them (evaluation group + auditing team).**
- **The third meeting** will be a consensus meeting discussing questions with significant differences and identify first ideas of possible actions (evaluation group + auditing team). Will we succeed and develop a cycle route network not only on paper, but for real people in real urban areas and countryside? The meeting should take place in June/July 2021.
- **The fourth meeting** addresses to elaborate a first draft of the action plan for the national cycle plan based on possible structure for action plan elaborated by the auditing team based on the findings of the second workshop and recommendations from existing strategies on national and transnational level. The meeting should take place in autumn 2021.
- **The fifth meeting** will be the cherry on the top. It should be quite easy to define investment plans and funding. This meeting will take place in the autumn of 2022, but as mentioned above, it is today when the decision on financial resources is being made. Therefore, the matter of funding requires special attention throughout the whole process of developing your NCP.

3.2. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

To achieve modal shift towards cycling, investment in infrastructure and promotion is needed. However, cycling is rarely valued as an equal mode of transport or included in national investment plans. Ensuring the allocation of sufficient budgetary resources should be an integral part of the development of national cycling plans. Experience shows that a sustained minimum level of investment is a prerequisite for significant improvement in cycling conditions. Financing should be provided at all administrative levels in order to foster the implementation of cycling measures and guarantee the maintenance of infrastructure. Since competencies in areas related to cycling vary from country to country, a set share of the national transport budget should be allocated to cycling over all levels of governance.

Examples from all around Europe show that depending on the level of cycling in the respective country the aggregated investment level per capita and year vary from 5-10€, 10-25€ for more ambitious countries and 25-30€ for countries which already have a very high level of cycling.

For several countries, estimations have been made on how much resources should be invested in cycling in order to achieve substantial progress in terms of modal shift.

To achieve the national goal of increasing modal share funding needs and costs have been analysed. According to the results of a study investments for towns and cities will be around 8-19 € per inhabitant and year whereas funding needs for districts will be around 1-6 € per inhabitant and year.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) recommends that 20 per cent of the transport budget be allocated to walking and cycling. The Netherlands invests about 7 per cent of its transport budget – about €30 per person annually – in cycling. The United Kingdom (outside London) recommends 17 £/capita/year (approx. 22.5 €) to double number of cycling. In 2020, the Irish government in its government programme decided to follow the UNEP recommendation and allocate 20 per cent of the capital transport budget to walking and cycling – 10 per cent to walking and 10 per cent to cycling.

To justify the allocated budget, new indicators that take the benefits of cycling into account should be used in cost-benefit analyses. This will raise the awareness of those benefits and change the perceptions of public authorities and sources of funding. International funding schemes might provide front-end financing but are seldom used to their full potential.

Furthermore we would like to raise your awareness to the recommendations included in the pan-European Master Plan for the objective of **providing sustainable investments and efficient funding mechanisms**:

Tool 2.1. Set up sustainable national funding schemes to promote cycling

One option for national authorities is to set up funding schemes to support local or regional authorities in their efforts to promote cycling. Cycling should be treated equally with other modes of transport when identifying and accessing financing measures including for infrastructure. It is crucial to sustain adequate investment levels over the long term in order to achieve a perennial modal shift. In addition to the financial engagement of the public sector, possibilities for private sector financing (e.g. for public bicycle-sharing systems) and other financial transport regulators (e.g. congestion charges, parking fees and a gasoline tax) should be explored. In the light of the substantial health benefits of cycling, financing from the prevention funds of health insurance providers may be an option, especially for promotional measures.

Tool 2.2. Establish close cooperation with international financial institutions in order to ensure funding for cycling infrastructure

Cycling infrastructure projects have a very high rate of return on investment. Therefore, investments in cycling should be attractive for international financial institutions and other donors. Involving financial institutions could be the basis for additional funding opportunities. Often, donors have special conditions and rules for the financing of infrastructure projects, which require standardized key performance indicators and other relevant data.

Tool 2.3. Consider the impact of cycling during investment decisions

Considering the impact of and on cycling should be standard procedure in cost-benefit analyses of transport projects and should include transport, environment, and health impacts. The issue should be addressed at the transnational level by developing an internationally agreed methodology for transport or urban development in cooperation with the international financial institutions, the international development agencies, ECE and WHO. This process should include a review of existing cost-benefit analyses in ECE and WHO/Europe member States and identification of the benefits and costs used. Guidance for assessing the health impact of transport or urban initiatives (e.g. using HEAT) that include their impact on cycling should be developed. Environmental impact assessment or, if appropriate, strategic environmental assessment should be standard procedure for transport projects, plans, programmes and policies.

3.3. DATA RESOURCES

Assessing the benefits of cycle use requires the systematic collection of statistical data. A comparable, reliable statistical database for the pan-European region is a prerequisite for the monitoring and benchmarking of cycling promotion.

The first step will be to prepare an overview of existing data at the regional, national and pan-European levels⁹. The next step will entail collecting comparable and reliable statistical data using a minimum set of indicators, including the modal share of cycling, the annual number of passenger-kilometres cycled per capita, the number of national cycling plans (status: developed, adopted or implemented), the annual number of cyclist fatalities per kilometre cycled, the number of kilometres of cycle infrastructure, the average number of bicycles per inhabitant and per household and the number of bicycles sold annually. With digitization and new technologies, new ways of collecting statistical data may be developed. The aim is to collect baseline data at the national level for 2020 (see Step 3) as well as define relevant performance/output indicators (see step 4 and 5) to monitor the implementation of the strategy (see step 7).

This common database will have an immediate impact on the credibility stakeholders' arguments in favor of cycling and will be used in discussions with financial institutions and taxpayers regarding higher budget allocations to cycling. It will also serve as a powerful monitoring and evaluation tool for comparing the effectiveness of measures and identifying success factors (measures that might serve as best practice for other countries) that will attract available funds to the investments that promise the highest impact.

Furthermore we would like to raise your awareness to the recommendations included in the pan-European Master Plan for the objective of **improving cycling statistics for use in efficient monitoring and benchmarking**:

Tool 3.1. Provide adequate and reliable statistical data for monitoring the level of cycling

Based on the aforementioned overview of existing data at the regional, national and European levels (including quality), a minimum set of comparable, reliable and harmonized statistical data will be collected (e.g., by applying the Eurostat Passenger Mobility Guidelines or the outcome of the SHANTI Project). Additionally, it is recommended that a national travel survey be conducted (or updated) in country. This additional information will offer greater insight into the behaviour, needs and preferences of cyclists.

⁹ As for the DCP partners, this was already done when preparing the status quo questionnaire

Tool 3.2. Support countries' efforts to collect systematic, internationally comparable data

The ECE Inland Transport Committee Working Party on Transport Statistics, in cooperation with Eurostat and the International Transport Forum, already provides an internationally recognized framework and methodology for the collection of transport-related statistics, which should be expanded to include detailed cycling-related statistics (such as kilometres cycled and cycling fatalities), using existing data collection systems where possible.

Tool 3.3. Highlight the benefits of cycling by developing and applying common tools

HEAT can be used to estimate the value of the reduced mortality resulting from regular walking or cycling. The tool is designed to help urban planners, transport authorities and health practitioners to make the case for new investment in active mobility and quantify the economic value of active mobility. The newest version of HEAT includes modules on mortality from air pollution and road traffic injury and a module to estimate changes in carbon emissions resulting from modal shifts towards cycling and walking. Further improvements and tools are necessary in order to assess and highlight the impact of cycling on the economy using a common methodology and harmonized data.

Note:

When arguing for any issue, it is always necessary to have hard data and a detailed database. What we need is data on mobility, modal split, traffic safety (here we expect close cooperation with SABRINA project), or environmental impacts.

3.4. EXISTING STRATEGIES ETC.

Besides the necessary human, financial and data resources it needs to be mentioned that you do not have to start from scratch. You can draw on a wealth of literature to find answers; find a list at the end of the Guideline. The Guideline was elaborated based on the following sources:

- Recommendations from the **Pan-European master plan for cycling promotion** (the recommendations will be signed by transport ministers in Vienna in May 17-18, 2021).
- The **toolbox of best available practices** from the countries of the pan-European region (available after the adoption of the pan-European Master Plan for Cycling Promotion)
- Fact sheets that were elaborated in the **Central MeetBike (CMB)** project which was implemented in the CENTRAL EUROPE programme in 2011-2014. The Czech partner was

one of the project partners in CMB, but as a student at that time. The ideas were similar to DCP. And finally recommendations from the European Cycling Federation www.ecf.com

- **EU Cycling Strategy.** Recommendations for Delivering Green Growth and an Effective Mobility in 2030¹⁰.
- **Existing National Cycling Strategies and Plans:** 16 countries currently have national cycling plans or similar policy documents in place: Austria, Belgium (with Flanders, Wallonia and the Brussels-Capital Region each having their own plan), Czechia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (with England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales each having their own plan). Italy, Malta, the Russian Federation, Slovenia, and Spain are currently developing such plans.

¹⁰ https://ecf.com/eu_cycling_strategy

Annex

The example set of indicators for specific objectives:

1.1. Improve the regulatory framework for cycling promotion

- Number of new cycle-friendly regulations into traffic laws

1.2. Create a user-friendly cycling infrastructure and National Cycle route network

- The kilometres of cycle infrastructure,
- The kilometres of (signposted) cycle routes,
- The number of improved accident blackspots

1.3. Promote cycling for a more resilient transport system

- Creating a program on redistribution of a road space fairly among all road users
- Number of supported projects / Number of new projects for redistribution of a road space

1.4. Include cycling in the planning processes and facilitate multimodality

- Creating / Updating a program on multimodality (cycling, public transport, and walking)
- The number of supported projects in the multimodality program.
- The number of bicycle racks

1.5. New technology and innovation

- Creating / updating program to support innovative cycling approaches to last mile services
- The number of supported projects

2.1. Supporting educational and training tools.

- Establish a national knowledge centre or “bicycle academy”

2.2. Promote cycling through incentives and mobility management

- Creating / updating program to promote cycling through incentives and mobility management
- Creating a program to provide communities, companies and consumers with financial support for the purchase of bicycles (e.g., electric or cargo)

2.3. Improved Health and Safety

- Creating / updating a program to support active mobility campaigns and awareness raising, in relation to support for health and prevention
- Creating / updating a program to support road safety campaigns and raising awareness
- The number of supported projects
- The number of schools involved in the program

2.4. Marketing and communication plan

- Creating / updating program to develop communication plans and specific activities
- The number of developed communication plans
- The number of marketing events with politicians (e.g., a promotional bike ride)
- The number of press releases (action Changing the approach of media)
- The number of programs designated for the public

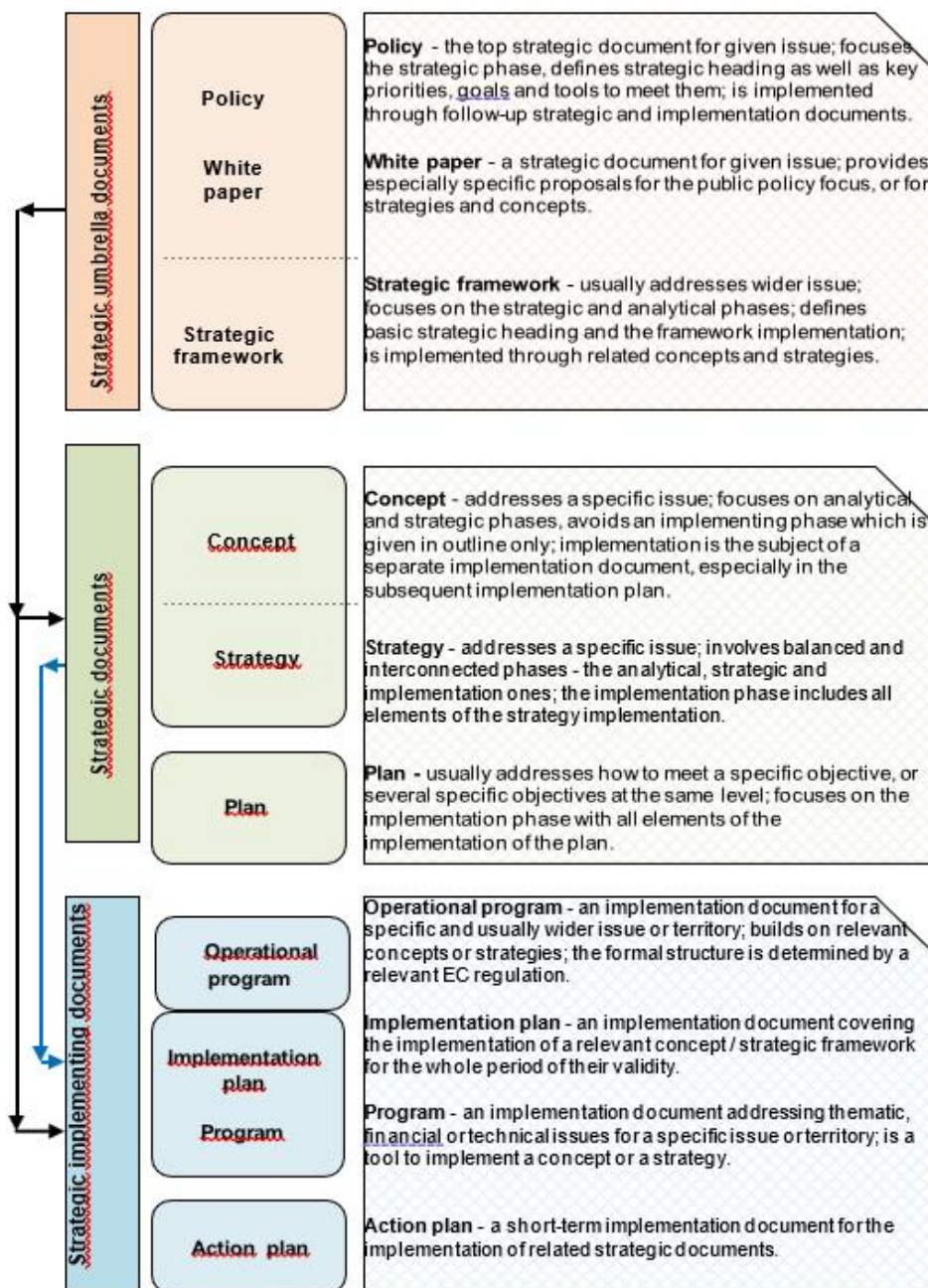
2.5. Cycle Tourism

- Establish national cycling tourism coordination centres
- The number of projects supported from national resources (a website, promotional materials, events)
- Introduce a national cycle-friendly service scheme
- Adopt and implement national guidelines for the signalization of cycle route networks
- The number of events with the public

Minimum set of indicators for tools:

- Create strong cycling working groups and appoint a national cycling officer
- Linking the activities of the self-government authorities at various levels (municipal authority, regional authority, suburban municipalities).
- The number of stakeholders involved in the implementation of the cycling strategy (state institutions, schools, universities, main employers, civil society representatives, urban planners, etc.)
- The total amount of funds to support cycling from national resources
- The total amount of funds to support cycling from European resources

Typology - a methodological recommendation from the Ministry of Regional Development the Czech Republic



Examples specific objectives and actions

1. Specific objective: Cycling Infrastructure

People are primarily interested in concrete actions they can see in real. Without it there is nothing to be promoted. **Specific objective 1 - Support Cycling Infrastructure** is focused on concrete actions and task.

- **1.1. Improve the regulatory framework for cycling promotion**
- **1.2. Create a user-friendly cycling infrastructure and National Cycle route network**
- **1.3. Promote cycling for a more resilient transport system**
- **1.4. Include cycling in the planning processes and facilitate multimodality**
- **1.5. New technology and innovation**

1.1. Improve the regulatory framework for cycling promotion

Despite differences in regulatory frameworks, national authority might adopt the good practices of other countries: steps taken in order to ensure the safety of cyclists and pedestrians (e.g., traffic regulations, directional signage and traffic lights) should be compiled on a systematic basis and evaluated for use in other countries. Setting common standards for heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) can reduce or even eliminate blind spots and improve pedestrian and cyclist safety.

Improving regulatory frameworks can facilitate the smooth coexistence of all modes of transport. It improves safety, provides clear guidance for all concerned and acknowledges cycling as an attractive mode of transport.

Other types of vehicles such as cargo bicycles, delivery tricycles, handcycles and electrically assisted cycles offer a wide range of possibilities for new groups of users, compete for the existing infrastructure and are often not subject to regulation or standardization. They should be used as effectively as possible in order to tap their potential and increase the share of cycling, walking and public transport while taking care not to compromise the safety or convenience of other vulnerable users.

Action 1.1.1. Consider incorporating cycle-friendly regulations into traffic laws and guidance documents

Many traffic laws and guidance documents still lack regulations designed to promote cycling and increase the safety of cyclists. Rules and principles that have proved effective should be considered for adoption by ECE and WHO member States. New rules that are consistent with national priorities and circumstances should be tested and evaluated from the point of view of their impact on safety, traffic, and comfort.

Action 1.1.2. Create cycle-friendly traffic conditions

On high-speed or high-density roads, a divided infrastructure increases cyclists' perception of safety and may attract more people to cycling. Where appropriate, traffic speeds should be limited to 30km/h or less where bicycles and motorized traffic mix, but care should be taken so that speed control devices do not create hazards for cyclists. Where speeds cannot be lowered, or where justified by traffic densities, authorities should seek to separate bicycle and motor traffic whenever feasibly.

Action 1.1.3. Improve and harmonize vehicle (equipment) specifications

For other vehicles such as cargo bicycles and delivery tricycles, regulations should harmonize authorization and classification procedures in order to establish safety and behaviour rules and set up transnational standardization with a view to the development of a new ECE–WHO/Europe norm. To reduce the number of injuries and deaths from collisions with cyclists, local, national and international specifications for HGV design should address the blind spot problem and guidelines on HGV or lorry access restrictions and public procurement of HGVs in urban areas should be developed. The European Union initial qualification of professional drivers now includes references to cycling and urban driving.

Note: Legal tools and regulations belong in the New/Updated National Cycling Plans. Many of us have already heard that "under current law, this cannot be done". Solving the problem requires only one "simple" thing - to recognize that the legislation is outdated and make proper amendments. In the Czech Republic, we have got a long list of actions that require some legal amendments. Each country should draw up such a list. The first step you can do is to fill in the Status Quo Questionnaire that will help reveal shortcomings. See more details in a separate chapter. For example, does your law enable to implement Cycle Streets? If does not, it is recommended to strive for legislation changes, which have been achieved four years ago in our country. However, there is still a lack of confidence in the actions; fortunately, there are other tools to help - education and marketing.

1.2. Create a user-friendly cycling infrastructure and National Cycle route network

Cycling infrastructure is constructed, managed, promoted and maintained at various administrative levels. Strategic planning is needed in order to connect these levels (e.g., flagship cross-border infrastructure, such as EuroVelo, and denser national networks). In many countries, existing design standards do not reflect cyclists' needs or ensure a coherent, attractive cycling network; a trans-European cycling network with a consistent interlinked structure should be created. European cycling routes should be planned with national routes as the backbone of the network, regional and local routes linking communities and some sections serving multiple needs. Each level of cycling infrastructure needs to be further managed, promoted, monitored, and maintained. The outcome of this approach will provide greater safety, convenience and satisfaction for current cyclists and encouragement for potential ones.

Create a user-friendly cycling infrastructure means creating of the Danube Cycle Route Network (DCRN) within the DCP project. Further details are presented in the **Guidelines to define a National Cycling Route Network**.

Action 1.2.1. Develop or expand a methodology for and monitor implementation of a National cycling network

The establishment of such a network will help national and regional governments to identify, design and prioritize backbone cycling corridors. National, regional, and local governments might approach international financial institutions and other international donors with more structured and ready-to-be-financed project proposals.

Action 1.2.2. Coordinate the establishment and maintenance of national, regional, and local cycling networks including parking facilities

The development of national cycle route networks should be coordinated at the national level while regional and local cycle networks should be coordinated by the relevant bodies. These may include trans-European routes (see action 3.1) and/or connect with those of neighbouring countries. Such networks should be created in partnership with the relevant national, regional, and local authorities and stakeholders, in light of their respective competencies, in order to ensure that the appropriate infrastructure for various purposes including bicycle parking facilities is in place.

Action 1.2.3. Standardize cycling infrastructure

Minimum infrastructure quality standards that ensure the coherence, directness, safety, comfort, and attractiveness of cycling networks should be adopted at the highest possible level and, at a minimum, as a condition for all projects financed by states, the European Union or international financial institutions. In order to increase its acceptance, the standardization process should be accompanied by promotion and training activities. Other infrastructure standards, such as those for bridge or tunnel design, should take these minimum quality standards into account.

Note: There are a range of common cycle infrastructure measures that can be implemented across a cycle network, which include the following: Cycle lanes, Cycle tracks, Cycle highways, Grade-separated crossings, Intersections, Contra-flow cycling, Mixed-use zones, Cycle streets, Multimodal integration, Recreational Cycle Routes, Cycle parking, Signage and wayfinding.

An important element of the cycle network development process is the selection of appropriate cycle measures that address gaps or challenges faced by your city. There is no single answer to which design solutions or measures should be implemented, but there are a number of key factors that cities should take into consideration in the decision-making process:

- **What is the route's function?** Main route, top cycling route or local route
- **What is the spatial environment?** Inside or outside the urban/built-up area
- **What is the traffic situation?** Intensity and speed of motorised traffic; Road function – connector road, distributor road, access road; Physical characteristics – available width, number of lanes etc.

1.3 Promote cycling for a more resilient transport system

The link between active mobility and urban resilience is two-fold. On the one hand, increases in cycling (and walking) support a modal shift towards active mobility for short and medium distance trips and help reduce the pressure on public transport during peak hours. On the other hand, these increases are enablers of shifts towards the “city of proximity”, where citizens can meet their essential daily needs within distances that could be conveniently covered on foot or by bike.

The reallocation of space from cars allows a growing number of cyclists and pedestrians to move safely while maintaining physical distancing during the pandemic. Furthermore, these measures, even if temporary, allowed many citizens to experiment with cycling and walking under safer conditions, possibly contributing to unleashing a new demand and greater political backing for measures supporting active mobility. Many cities and central Governments began creating dedicated cycle paths, reducing speed limits, and subsidizing bike purchases to encourage cycling.

Action 1.3.1. Redistribute road space fairly among all road users

The situation during the pandemic demonstrated that urban areas should consider redistributing road space to include walking and cycling. The main principle should be that pedestrians and cyclists are equal road users on the street and public space should be divided equitably among all involved.

New cycling facilities, for instance temporary bike lanes and widening pavements, make essential travel possible and safe. Reshaping roads in built up areas is another important mean to calm traffic and make it safer and more attractive for cyclists and pedestrians.

Action 1.3.2. Optimizing public spaces and making them attractive and enjoyable

Besides widening pavements and introducing new cycling facilities, reallocating space from cars should create more enjoyable, attractive spaces for more liveable cities. Relevant strategies could include creating parklets; installing climate adaptation elements, such as shade; and installing urban art. During the pandemic, tactical urbanism interventions, such as the use of traffic cones, plastic bollards, and construction separators, were low-cost, temporary changes in the built environment to reclaim street space from car parking and travel lanes. Properly designed shared spaces are permanent elements in the road network, which can easily be adapted to changing framework conditions Multifunctional street areas could provide adequate means to increase cities 'resilience.

Action 1.3.3. Integrate cycling into recovery and resilience plans

Even during lockdown restrictions, bicycles can be a means of transport (besides walking) that is still available for essential trips. In addition to ensuring that cycling infrastructure can accommodate a potential wave of new cyclists, decision-makers need to develop plans to increase safety (for instance, by introducing low-speed zones), install new bike parking facilities, provide additional (e-)bikes in existing rental/sharing schemes, and introduce new or expand existing subsidy schemes for buying new (e-)bikes or cargo bikes. These measures should be part of recovery and resilience plans on different levels that make it easier to respond to the challenges of pandemic crisis.

1.4 Include cycling in the planning processes and facilitate multimodality

Cycling is often insufficiently integrated into the transport system, limiting the potential for everyday cycling over short distances. Cycling infrastructure is not considered until a very late stage of development projects, when all other infrastructure and facilities are already in place, raising the cost of subsequent adaptation.

Cycling should be included in the drafting of regulations on infrastructure planning. Cycling-friendly planning principles should be applied consistently during the planning process unless they are proved irrelevant. Cycling for everyday trips is most common over short distances and might be expanded by integrating it into the transport system as a whole. Close cooperation with all relevant stakeholders will help to operate the transport chain more efficiently.

Cycling-friendly spatial and land-use planning will make the most fundamental change visible: it will reduce transport needs, provide space for non-motorized traffic and result in more liveable and attractive cities and settlements.

Action 1.4.1. Incorporate cycling into all infrastructure planning

Regulations at all administrative levels should establish basic principles for cyclist-friendly infrastructure planning. All relevant technical details should be provided in cycling planning guidelines, manuals, and design standards, while ensuring flexibility in order to take local, regional and national circumstances into account. Guidelines, manuals, and standards should be promoted and regularly updated. Close cooperation and harmonization with relevant institutions, agencies, and affected stakeholders in adapting existing regulations is also necessary. The process should culminate in regulations and plans, followed by monitoring of their implementation.

Action 1.4.2. Consider cycling during spatial planning and incorporate it into building regulations

Spatial planning should facilitate short trips suitable for cycling by ensuring an adequate land-use mix and considering the needs of cyclists and non-motorized traffic in general. Where all basic public services are provided at the local level, car trips can be replaced by cycling and walking.

Cycling-friendly building regulations should set detailed requirements (including secure bicycle parking, chargers, positioning of entrances, wide doors, oversized elevators, changing rooms, lockers, and repair stands).

Action 1.4.3. Facilitate multimodality (cycling, public transport, and walking)

In order to facilitate bicycle transport, public transport vehicles should be able to carry bicycles comfortably and affordably. A smooth transfer between the bicycle network and the platform should be ensured by ramps, special staircases or elevators. The responsible institutions should include the necessary vehicle or service specifications in the tender documentation for public procurement and introduce attractive tariff systems.

Multimodality should be facilitated by providing secure and convenient bicycle parking at public transport stations as well as services such as public bicycle sharing schemes. While extending the catchment area of the stations, such facilities would enable attractive multimodal alternatives to car use for a large share of commuters. Multimodal route planners and applications and traffic information systems should include cycling networks and bicycle-sharing schemes. The introduction of innovative e-ticket systems and mobility cards should cover all sustainable transport modes, including public transport, car-sharing, bicycle-sharing and secure bicycle parking.

In order to support multimodality and the integration of cycling into the infrastructure network, multimodal transportation agencies should be established. To that end, the relevant agencies must be identified and an agreement on basic cooperation principles reached

1.5 Make use of new technology and innovation

In recent years, technological development has accelerated and new types of bicycles, similar vehicles and tools that support cycling are ready for market and can make cycling more attractive, safer and more comfortable. Electric bicycles have become increasingly popular among both recreational users and commuters, who are discovering the advantages of electric support. The average distance covered during a daily commute can be almost doubled with the use of electric bicycles and speed pedelecs.

Innovative features such as travel and journey planners, data collection sensors and electric mobility have become available for cyclists as well. The Intelligent Transport System (ITS) can improve traffic management through communication between bicycles and traffic lights and with new technologies, the flow of cyclists can be recognized and prioritized. Data can be collected from tags placed on bicycles or through applications on cyclists' smartphones. Applications can also prevent bicycle theft, alert riders to open spaces in large bicycle parking areas, improve signage and provide Digital Information Services. It should also be borne in mind that the establishment of separate lanes for self-driving cars could reduce space for cyclists in inner cities and should be avoided.

The patchwork of technology associated with the bicycle sector is an unregulated industry that is difficult to compartmentalize. The role of government can be increased by setting agendas, adopting more open standards and encouraging cooperation, thus promoting cycling and benefiting users.

Action 1.5.1. Encourage vehicle and infrastructure innovation

Governments can play an important role in promoting and funding innovation in bicycles and bicycle infrastructure. Bicycle innovations can, for example, help elderly people to keep cycling safely until a higher age. Such innovations include saddles that lowers automatically when the cyclist stops, allowing elderly people to place both feet on the ground when stationary; and handlebars that are automatically stabilized to allow the rider to keep cycling safely at low speeds. An example of a helpful infrastructure innovation is the rain sensor on traffic lights to give cyclists priority when it rains.

Action 1.5.2. Introduce open standards for data exchange and use smart data to improve cycling conditions

The rise of numerous forms of data collection and innovative applications has resulted in a non-transparent patchwork of standards. As each developer focuses on the implementation of its own standards, data exchange is restricted. The introduction of open standards at the European Union or ECE level would make applications accessible to a broader public and promote better business collaboration. Possible applications include multimodal travel information; public bicycle-sharing; bicycle parks; and theft prevention.

A better understanding of when and where people cycle and where they do not, which routes they choose and what speeds are most common will facilitate the development of strategies that promote cycling and make it more comfortable.

Government should cooperate with third parties and develop information-sharing strategies so that data collected from cyclists can be used to improve urban cycling and made available to interested stakeholders. For example, public bicycle-sharing systems in various cities and

countries might benefit from open standards and interoperable systems, particularly given the growth of mobility as a service.

Action 1.5.3. Support innovative cycling approaches to last-mile services

The issue of last-mile logistics for e-commerce and home shopping is essential to the sustainability of cities and the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. Innovative cargo bicycles provide solutions to this problem. Relevant products and vehicles must be identified and tested in the local environment with legislation or regulations amended where necessary. The benefits of newly developed solutions should be evaluated carefully. Support and supervision should be provided by national ministries. To preserve the accessibility and liveability of cities, the number of cars entering inner cities needs to be decreased. Stimulating last-mile solutions for passenger transport, such as “Park and Bike” locations and encouraging bicycle sharing, combined with mobility management measures including higher parking rates, can be implemented in many cities.

2 Specific objectives: soft measures

Specific objective 2 - Soft measures is focused on concrete actions and task.

- **2.1. Supporting educational and training tools.**
- **2.2. Promote cycling through incentives and mobility management**
- **2.3. Improved Health and Safety**
- **2.4. Marketing and communication plan**
- **2.5. Cycle Tourism**

Supporting educational and training tools.

Education actions must also belong in any strategic plan, let alone a cycling strategy with many revolutionary ideas for which our countries may not been prepared yet. Following our practical experience, we must admit that it will not be before 2030 when the ideas could be fully understood. Some of the proposed measures might be a point of conflict on the part of the police or politicians or even citizens who are the most affected after all. You might have heard in your country too that people who ride bikes sure are socially disadvantaged because cannot afford buying a car. Here just briefly about several recommendations.

- There is still a lack of promotion and awareness raising about benefits of cycling and principles of planning cycling. All education activities of key stakeholders therefore need to be supported, either via the Bike Academy, or in a broader context in the Urban Mobility Academy. Education, awareness raising and know-how exchange - these are significant components of any strategy which can be done through:

- Conferences, workshops, education and training events
 - Counselling on urban mobility for towns and cities
 - Expert websites
 - Methodologies on cycling, sustainable transport and mobility
- The overriding goal is to **achieve changes in how the police representatives and other decision makers approach** the issue of urban transport systems and the public space design. Cycling projects are often rejected only due to a lack of awareness, “backed up” with a well-established requirement to provide the greatest possible capacity for car users. Needs and interests of car drivers are prioritized and actions to improve conditions for cyclists and pedestrians are often neglected.

Action 2.1.1. Establish a national knowledge centre or “bicycle academy” for the training of professionals and enhancement of skills

Education, training and awareness-raising are the most efficient methods of transferring knowledge and disseminating cycling-friendly solutions. “Bicycle academies” – platforms for the exchange of know-how– can provide the necessary professional training and skill enhancement. They can be linked to existing research, academic and information institutions (of relevance to cycling), advocacy groups, non-governmental organizations, cycling embassies and international and local expert groups. To facilitate the exchange of know-how and cooperation among Member states a pan-European cooperation among the relevant institutions of the members states should be strengthened e.g. by developing centre of competence at the pan-European level.

Promote cycling through incentives and mobility management

Many countries offer tax benefits to people who use their cars or public transport for their daily commute; only a few countries do the same for cycling. Monetary incentives are a powerful tool that can change behaviour and enhance cycling’s status. The recent introduction of electric bicycles expands the scope of bicycle use far beyond that of conventional bicycles in terms of distance and convenience. However, this potential is not being fully tapped owing to considerably higher purchase cost. The aim is to have cycling acknowledged and promoted as an equal mode of transport in the fiscal system, while improving public awareness and appreciation of it.

Monetary incentives might include, tax benefits, the installation of cycling infrastructure by companies and subsidies for commuting by bicycle. Electric mobility funding schemes should promote both electric cars and electric bicycles. Promotional campaigns should raise awareness of cycling and its benefits with a view to behaviour change and endeavour to attract groups that have not previously cycled.

Action 2.2.1. Introduce fiscal incentives for cycling

Depending on the national fiscal system, the aim of a level playing field for commuting can be achieved in various ways. Examples of fiscal incentives include the introduction of a tax-free mobility budget, tax-free kilometric reimbursement for cycling to work, tax incentives for bicycles, cycling infrastructure for employees and facilitation of bicycle usage for business trips. Where there is no political majority for the introduction of a specific tax benefit for cycling, the elimination of subsidies for commuting by car can level the fiscal playing field for all modes of transport. Once fiscal incentives have been introduced, it is crucial to promote them in order to raise awareness among employers and other potential beneficiaries.

Action 2.2.2. Provide communities, companies and consumers with financial support for the purchase of bicycles (e.g., electric or cargo)

Wider diffusion of high-quality conventional bicycles and innovative bicycles such as pedal electric bicycles (pedelecs), folding bicycles and cargo bicycles can steer behaviour away from car or van trips. Therefore, all electric-mobility strategies and funding schemes should include electric bicycles. In markets with low sales figures, a general subsidy of €500 for electric bicycles and €1,000 for electric cargo bicycles might help to bridge the price gap with conventional bicycles and facilitate market uptake. In countries where electric bicycles already have a large market share, fiscal incentives should focus on cycle use although financial support schemes (particularly for pedelecs and electric cargo bicycles, owing to their higher price, and for small businesses) may still be an option

Action 2.2.3. Promote the use of cycling through mobility management

Campaigns to promote cycling, for both daily and touristic purposes are a necessary part of efforts to create a cycling culture. Mobility management offers a wide range of instruments designed to promote cycling and other sustainable modes of transport by including demand management for car use and changing travelers' attitudes and behaviour. At the core of mobility management are "soft" measures, such as information, promotion, organization, coordination, education and training, location and support, that enhance the effectiveness of "hard" measures (e.g., new bicycle lanes). In many cases, responsibility for these measures lies at the local and/or regional level. National authorities should have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and provide a suitable framework to support local and regional efforts.

Improve Health and Safety

Each year, about 1 million deaths in the WHO/Europe region are attributed to insufficient physical activity.¹¹ Active mobility in the form of cycling as a means of transportation is a highly promising approach to the integration of physical activity into daily life. Measures designed to increase cyclists' safety should be incorporated into national and international road safety policies.

On 11 March 2020, the WHO declared the COVID-19 outbreak to be a pandemic. The pandemic strongly affected societies and their economies, causing unplanned changes, including to mobility and transport. During lockdown, transport emissions dramatically decreased, due to limited circulation of vehicles, including motorized ones. Public transportation was most hit, with travelers avoiding using it for fear of contagion, or because the passenger-carrying capacity of vehicles was reduced to maintain physical distancing. Walking and cycling emerged as viable mobility options for essential especially short and medium distance trips for three main reasons:

- (a) Provision of physical distancing while travelling;
- (b) Changing travel patterns, with many people and children practising teleworking or distance learning due to lockdown restrictions, therefore meeting their daily needs close to home;
- (c) Partial substitution of public transport.

The three above-mentioned reasons contribute to increasing cities' resilience to possible future shocks of a similar nature, in addition to contributing to health and environment, and bringing economic benefits. As such, WHO recommended walking and cycling for essential - especially short and medium distance - trips whenever feasible during lockdown (WHO, 2020)¹².

¹¹ <http://www.who.int/nmh/publications/ncd-status-report-2014/en/>.

¹² See <https://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/health-emergencies/coronavirus-covid-19/technical-guidance/moving-around-during-the-covid-19-outbreak>

Action 2.3.1. Strengthen awareness among health professionals and build their capacity to advocate cycling as a tool for promoting physical activity and improving public health

Regular cycling has significant health benefits. Public health professionals can be a strong voice in advocating for the inclusion of cycling in health policies and interventions. This requires developing well-structured, user-friendly guidelines for physicians and public health professionals, raising awareness of the links between active mobility and health and addressing issues related to specific health conditions. The guidelines, underpinned by strong scientific evidence, should include cycling as a preventive or rehabilitative treatment for some health conditions and in order to prevent various non-communicable diseases. They should also provide clear information on the recommended speed and duration of cycling for specific diseases in light of factors such as age and weight. Advocacy for and promotion of cycling should extend beyond the health sector to address the educational, occupational and recreational settings in which people live and work. In view of the reduced risk of non-communicable diseases, health insurance companies may wish to consider providing financial incentives for subscribers who cycle regularly.

Action 2.3.2. Integrate health- and cycling-related issues into formal and informal education and awareness-raising activities

The health-related benefits of cycling should be promoted widely through formal and informal education at all educational stages, from early childhood. Ministries of health and education should include the health benefits of cycling, as well as traffic rules and road safety, in teaching curricula. For example, manuals written in a clear, concise and user-friendly style, followed by training and awareness-raising exercises, might be developed for teachers and parents. Children and youth should be given an opportunity to develop cycling skills and practise them safely. Opportunities to develop a safe cycling infrastructure, including protected parking places, and to facilitate regular cycling to school, university and other educational and recreational facilities should be sought. These measures should be integrated into schools' mobility management plans.

Action 2.3.3. Incorporate cycling into road safety policies

Improving road safety for cyclists requires a holistic approach and should be integrated into road safety policies. Initiatives such as infrastructure and speed management are discussed in sections 2 and 3. Improving road users' behaviour through better information, education, awareness-raising and enforcement of traffic rules is an important aspect of road safety policy, as is vehicle – and especially motor vehicle – safety. Current technological developments such as Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA) and Automatic Emergency Braking (AEB) and truck safety features such as better direct vision and turning assist will have a positive impact on cyclists and pedestrians and should be considered when setting ECE vehicle standards.

Marketing and communication plan

To tell the truth, communication and public participation are the most difficult tasks in the entire cycling strategy process. Although towns and cities around the world like to present single campaigns like Bike to Work, European Mobility Week, etc., but this is not enough to achieve a change of mindset. What we need is a comprehensive communication and marketing plan at national, regional and local levels. There is no such a plan in the Czech Republic, and if there is, it is only formal one. On the contrary, what we do have: many existing resources to help European cities develop behaviour change campaigns. For example, there are 49 case studies on Civitas; 149 case studies on Elis; more than a dozen relevant resources on EPOMM; and academic papers, webinars, and toolboxes are quite easy to find too. While reassuring that it is a popular technique being used to manage mobility choices it can be rather overwhelming and difficult to know what lessons can be learnt from past experiences and how to develop future initiatives that are likely to be successful.

Well, how can we achieve required changes with the minimum experience we have had? The following recommendations can help:

- Be inspired by a brochure „Promoting Mobility Behaviour Change: Practical guidance for inspiring more walking, cycling and public transport and minimising car use.“
- Further develop CityChangers initiative, mentioned above in the Marketing Tools chapter. We start with people responsible for required changes, but we need to extend the target group.
- Involve the state-funded/non-governmental/non-profit organizations in the process, as well as civic and other associations which either support, or develop education and awareness raising activities with the aim to improve the perception of sustainable mobility, public transport and transport safety, using for example information and awareness-raising campaigns.
- Boost cooperation with companies, as well as mobility management.
- Introduction of electric bicycles expands the scope of bicycle use far beyond that of conventional bicycles in terms of distance and convenience.
- Point out the fact that Covid-19 is also the new beginning - nothing will be like before.
- Continue to use the tools (events, campaigns) already used before.

By combining all the elements the paradigm can be changed at the following levels:

d medium distance - trips whenever feasible during lockdown (WHO, 2020)¹³.

¹³ See <https://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/health-emergencies/coronavirus-covid-19/technical-guidance/moving-around-during-the-covid-19-outbreak>

Action 2.4.1. Changing the approach of local politicians.

Urban policy representatives must take the ownership - this is the prerequisite for both the approval and implementation of the cycling strategy. The problem is that local authorities change every four years (in the CR) but meeting the targets of the cycling strategy requires much more time, it is a long-term challenge. Moreover, political parties, for obvious reasons, approach their voters with popular and non-conflict topics and try to avoid those that may cause tension in the public, including car traffic restrictions. However, this apparent unpopularity might be just a prejudice. The aim is not to cancel car traffic, but to optimize car use and to make urban areas more attractive. And therefore, communication between experts and politicians is fundamental. There is one simple fact that should be highlighted, the more people ride bikes, the more available parking spaces for the drivers.

Action 2.4.2. Changing the approach of media.

Public impacts of journalists and of their description of cycling or traffic problems can be significant. Their work requires a high level of a transport flexibility, and private cars are the only suitable alternative how to do their work properly. Is that why transport is often limited to car traffic in the media? Here again, the experts could help so that the journalists approach transport issue in a more comprehensive way and help improve the image of cycling towards the public and politicians.

Action 2.4.3. Changing the approach of public.

Whether the required changes in transport behaviour are achieved, it ultimately depends on the majority behaviour of the public, largely influenced by media. However, the general perception of mobility and cycling cannot be changed without further education (schools) and giving positive examples (families). We need to replace car use and find a new basis for travel behaviour, not only because of the environment, but the public health and economy as well. Public demand for alternative transport options is gradually growing, and the political will of municipal authorities might either support the trend or slow it down due to a missing sustainable and long-term vision for urban planning.

Cycle tourism

Cycle tourism and recreational cycling are well established in many European countries and are making an increasingly significant contribution to national economies. According to a study commissioned by the European Parliament in 2012 and a THE PEP/ United Nations Environment Programme study on green jobs in cycling,¹⁴ cycle tourism contributes more than €44 billion per year to the economy of the European Union, Norway and Switzerland combined, in addition to the related environmental and societal benefits. However, there is still a frequent lack of coordination between various levels of responsibility for the design of cycling tourism routes and accompanying services such as public transport and accommodation. In order to ensure the continued growth of cycle tourism and recreational cycling, it is vital to oversee their development at the national level by establishing national cycling tourism coordination centres and bringing together the relevant service providers through cycling-friendly service schemes. It is also necessary to adopt and implement a national standard for cycle route network signalization. If these measures are designed holistically, cycling tourism will reach a wider share of the market and become more accessible, acting as a gateway for subsequent use of bicycles in daily life.

We believe that **bike tourism** is something to what almost everyone must have positive feelings. It has been becoming a phenomenon for recent years. The last barrier - a state of physical condition - has fallen away with e-bikes. People are able to ride 80km a day, no matter how hilly the terrain is (of course, provided that there are charging stations on the route). Bike tourism brings many economic benefits; tourism has lost a lot in the Covid-19 period, and bike tourism is one of the elements that can help to get back on track. Let us not afraid to come up with this statement, it is good to recall the benefits bike tourism brings to the whole society.

Action 2.5.1. Establish national cycling tourism coordination centres

The success of cycle tourism destinations requires the establishment of organizational structures to coordinate EuroVelo-related and other necessary actions at the national level. Such coordination would typically include the relevant national tourism ministry or authority, the national highway or transport ministry or authority, regional authorities, cycling organizations (representing users), organizations representing service providers (e.g. accommodation) and public transport operators. In addition to the identification of relevant stakeholders, the structure, legal status, tasks and responsibilities of the coordination centre must be established. While countries that are just beginning to promote cycling tourism might begin by establishing a working group with an initial contact point for inquiries, those with a long tradition of cycling tourism might set up a full coordination centre. Priorities and actions should be discussed during stakeholder workshops and financing secured.

¹⁴ <https://thepep.unece.org/node/86>.

Action 2.5.2. Introduce a national cycle-friendly service scheme

Cycle tourists have specific needs (e.g. safe and secure bicycle parking and tools for repairing minor mechanical problems) and service providers that meet these requirements can advertise them to potential customers through national cycle-friendly service schemes; these have been established in many countries and are often run by the National EuroVelo Coordination Centre (see recommendation 3.1). However, some countries do not have such schemes and in others a variety of regional schemes create a confusing situation for users. Existing systems should be coordinated at the national level and a single set of criteria and financing model, including marketing, promotion and training activities, should be agreed.

Action 2.5.3. Adopt and implement national guidelines for the signalization of cycle route networks

Some countries have no national guidelines or standard for the signalization of cycle routes. This entails the risk of signage that varies from one region to another or of a total absence of signage. National highway or transport authorities and governments should play a coordinating role in developing standards and adopting the corresponding regulations (see annex II of Plan). As they will be implemented at the local or regional level, the involvement of all stakeholders during the preparation phase is essential.