



Best practice bicycle safety – improvement fact sheet

Cycling strategies

Overview

The purpose of a cycling strategy document is to **promote cycling** in a given region/country, which will, if incorporated, contribute to **sustainable livelihoods, better environment, improved health and safety, greater social inclusion** and **economic prosperity** as well as overall improvement in the **quality of life**. Below, some examples of strategies on a global, EU and national level are provided.

Global/UN-level policies such as the Paris Agreement on Climate Change [1], the SDG's (Sustainable Development Goals) [2] and the New Urban Agenda [3] – carry a strong obligation to encourage active modes of transport, cycling included. Implementing cycling measures on a local level is part of the realisation of the global-level documents.

EU's strategy documents are fundamental for the additional growth of internal and external policies. Therefore, highlights of the cross-sectoral benefits of sustainable mobility and cycling in order to fulfil the Paris Agreement and the SDGs is of utmost importance. A good example of an EU level strategy is the **EU Cycling Strategy** [4], which serves as a guiding document and has provided recommendations on an EU, national, regional and local level. Recommendations within the document have a high potential to improve the status of cycling in the EU and will motivate more people to cycle if they are incorporated.

A growing number of European nations have developed and implemented national cycling programmes. Commonly, these national strategies and/or action plans establish specific tasks and targets for the growth of cycling on a national level. National cycling strategies enable national governments to provide defined support for the growth of cycling in their respective nations. The strategies need to convey a message to regional and municipal governments that cycling is important and should be considered in public initiatives under their authorities. **National cycling strategies** should ideally refer to the **coordination of cycling policies** (across vertical and horizontal levels), the **exchange of best practices, capacity building** for local and regional governments, **co-funding** for cycling infrastructure investments, and funding for **pilot projects, research** and **public awareness campaigns** [4].

Types of problems that the solution can solve





A good strategic foundation is a prerequisite for **treating bicycle traffic on an equal footing with other transport forms**, and for helping transport decision makers **set priorities**. It is proven that developing cycling infrastructure can bring about significant **modal shift changes** leaning towards the increase in cycling (between 11% and 48%, as stated by [6]), a change for which proper strategic planning is critical.


However, the growing popularity of cycling in many cities around the world demonstrates that behavioural change is possible, even where investment in **infrastructure is minimal or less than optimal**, as stated within [5]. Soliciting commitment is critically important in motivating people to move from intention to action and “Foot-in-the-door” strategies which require small initial commitment **have been proven successful at encouraging new and occasional cyclists to “give it a try”**.

Characteristics



Measure	Costs	Treatment life	Effectiveness
Cycling strategy [7]	€ € €	⌚ ⌚ ⌚	🚲 🚲 🚲

Implementation benefits

	Contributing to a health and activity of community if measures are well conceptualised and implemented
	A reduction in greenhouse gas emissions if measures are well conceptualised and implemented
	Improving bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure if measures are well conceptualised and implemented
	Increase of representation for vulnerable road users (VRUs) and raising mobility awareness

	Defining clear goals the community can work towards
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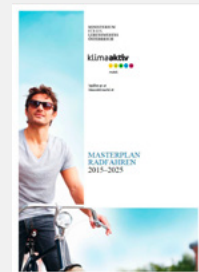
Implementation issues

	Goals set in strategies can be too ambitious
	Switch in governmental policies (i.e., post elections) might invalidate the document policies entirely or in part

Examples

Austria – Cycling Master Plan 2015-2025

The Cycling Master Plan published in May 2015 by the Austrian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management sets as its broad objective an **increase of the cycling modal share**, which should be realised through new **investments in quality cycling infrastructure** and by raising awareness of cycling on a daily basis. The priorities of the plan are: push for **investments** at all levels for the promotion of cycling; more **cycle-friendly conditions** such as the consolidation of infrastructure; information campaigns and awareness raising; optimisation of coordination with other modes of transport; bike as a healthy mode of transport [8, 11].



Slovak Republic – National Strategy of Development of Cycling Transport and Cycle Touring in the Slovak Republic

The National Strategy of Development of Cycling Transport and Cycle Touring in the Slovak Republic sets clear **guidelines and measures** for the development of cycling in Slovakia. The strategy focuses on several topics including the development of **infrastructure**, cycling **tourism**, **financial strategy** and **research**. Thanks to this general strategy, the Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development set the increase of the cycling modal share from 1.5%–2% in 2012 to 10% by 2020 as one of its goals. The Government's Manifesto for the years 2012-2016 called for development and emancipation of the cycling transport which should become a regular part of urban and regional transportation systems [9, 10, 11].



Related fact sheets

RISKS

- » Network issues
- » Narrow infrastructure
- » Speed differences in mixed spaces with pedestrians, E-Scooters etc.
- » Speed differences in mixed spaces with motorised traffic

References and links

1. *United Nations (2015). Paris Agreement*
2. *United Nations (2015). Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*
3. *United Nations (2016). New Urban Agenda*
4. *European Cyclists' Federation (2017). EU Cycling Strategy. In: https://ecf.com/system/files/EUCS_full_doc_small_file_0.pdf*
5. *Savan, B., Cohlmeier, E., Ledsham, T. (2017). Integrated strategies to accelerate the adoption of cycling for transportation. Transportation Research Part F, 46, pp. 236-249*
6. *Kraus, S. & Koch, N. (2021). Provisional COVID-19 infrastructure induces large, rapid increases in cycling. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 118 (15). <https://www.gcn.org/articles/Budgeting-for-a-Strategic-Plan>*
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11. *<https://ecf.com/policy-areas/cycling-all-policies/national-cycling-policies>*

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about safety on
two wheels.**

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