



Informal meeting of EU ministers for Transport

Luxembourg, October 7th, 2015

Declaration on Cycling as a climate friendly Transport Mode

Preamble

Innovation

Cycling is a European success storyⁱ. Bicycle innovation will boost jobs and growth and support EU industry through new technology and servicesⁱⁱ.

Environment

In and around Europe's many growing urban centres, cycling is an essential tool for congestion relief.ⁱⁱⁱ Both for the state and for citizens, cycling is the most cost effective transport mode after walking, as it produces massive positive externalities for society at little expenditure in terms of infrastructure and vehicles. When production, maintenance, operation and fuel are taken into account, cycling is the most greenhouse gas efficient transport mode of all. Considering that half of all passenger car trips made in most European cities are shorter than five kilometres and that more than half of all motorized cargo trips in EU cities could be shifted to bicycles^{iv}, there is significant potential to increase cycling's mode share and to improve quality of life.



Health

Cycling benefits society. Children who cycle to school concentrate better than those who are dropped off. Employees who cycle to work claim fewer paid sick days. The health benefits of switching from car commuting to bicycle commuting amply outweigh the safety risks. Cycling also becomes safer the more cyclists there are on the road: the 'Safety in Numbers' principle. According to conservative estimates by the World Health Organisation, if every adult in the EU walked or cycled for an additional 15 minutes a day, more than 100 000 premature deaths linked to insufficient physical activity could be avoided annually. Through congestion easing, emissions and noise reduction, public health and infrastructure cost savings, cycling benefits even those who don't practice it.

Financing

As a network based element of multimodal mobility sustaining an EU-wide industry, cycling can only fulfil its potential with support from all levels.^v Through the mainstreaming of the promotion of cycling into existing EU policy instruments (such as Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans in the 2013 Urban Mobility Package, Policy Orientations on Road Safety 2011-2020, CIVITAS 2020, ELTIS, URBACT and the European Mobility Week) and relevant funding instruments (including European Structural and Investment Funds, COSME and Horizon 2020), cycling can contribute towards several Commission priorities, such as triggering private investment in hundreds of thousands of sustainable jobs across all Member States, reducing emissions and increasing energy efficiency.



Action plan

Taking into account (1) the call of the European Parliament for 'an EU roadmap for cycling to be included in the Commission Work Programme'^{vi} and (2) the 2014 Paris Declaration^{vii} of the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) to develop 'a pan-European Master Plan for cycling promotion',

Ministers and State Secretaries call upon the Commission to consider, in full respect of the principle of subsidiarity, the following actions:

1. Integrate cycling into multimodal transport policy, including smart mobility, stressing the need to promote physical infrastructure and behavioural change programs.
2. Develop an EU level strategic document on cycling. This strategic document should (1) list all the goals within EU competence that would benefit from an increase in cycling's mode share, (2) identify EU policy and funding instruments that are already mobilized or that should be mobilized to increase cycling's mode share and to foster cycling related employment in the EU, and (3) include cycling in the above EU policies and funding instruments.
3. Set up a European focal point for cycling^{viii} (1) to serve as a one-stop-shop for cycling related questions, (2) to facilitate the exchange of best practices among Member States^{ix}, notably on cyclists' road safety, and (3) to monitor the implementation and the impact of the EU strategy for cycling.

Ministers and State Secretaries recognize that Member States can contribute to increasing cycling's mode share by:

4. Designating a national focal point for cycling to gather and disseminate best practices within the Member State and to cooperate with the European focal point for cycling as well as with existing forums, such as the United Nations' Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme.
5. Ensuring that national transport infrastructure projects consider and aim to strengthen international, national, regional and local cycling networks^x.



Ministers and State Secretaries welcome initiatives by urban, local and regional authorities to:

6. Include cycling in urban, local or regional projects, both as an efficient transport mode and as a recreational activity.
7. Draw on national and international best practices, co-funding opportunities and guidelines by working with national and European focal points for cycling and with other stakeholders.

Ministers and State Secretaries gathered in Luxembourg today are committed to promoting cycling as a climate friendly and efficient transport mode.



ⁱ The bicycle itself, bike-sharing and electric power assisted cycles (EPACs) were all invented in Europe. Urban design and transport experts from those Member States with the highest mode share for cycling are being commissioned to redesign public space and mobility chains all over the world.

ⁱⁱ 21 million bicycles were sold in the EU in 2014, outnumbering newly registered passenger cars by more than eight million. Public bike-share systems have been implemented in more than 800 cities on four continents. EU based manufacturers of EPAC technology lead the way in e-mobility, serving a rapidly growing global market of currently 35 million units a year. Cycling related manufacturing and services currently employ 650'000 people in the EU. Doubling the current mode share of cycling would raise that number to over one million.

ⁱⁱⁱ Compared to cars, bicycles consume seven to ten times less space while moving in urban areas, and eight to 50 times less space while parked. Given proper infrastructure, cycling is the fastest way to get 'from kitchen table to office desk' on distances of up to five kilometers, depending on traffic congestion and parking availability. Electric bicycles even compete favourably with cars for trips of up to 10 kilometers.

^{iv} Assumption of the Cyclelogistics study (EU funded): bikes or cargo-bikes can be used for private or commercial logistic trips carrying more than a handbag and less than 200kg on distances under 7km.

^v Cycling occurs locally, but cycling concerns all policy levels. Cycle routes often cross several municipal or provincial borders, and recreational long-distance routes even cross state borders. Member States can express and define their support for local and regional cycling initiatives through cycling strategies or by improving the cooperation between the different governmental tiers; a national focal point for cycling can assist sub-national authorities with technical and funding expertise. Member States can contribute to inter-modal mobility and to a coherent cycle path network by integrating cycling into national infrastructure projects such as railway stations and roads. Member States can provide fiscal incentives to shift commuters from private cars to active mobility and public transport. With a supportive policy framework in place, local authorities are able to take more and better initiatives to increase the mode share of cycling.

^{vi} 2015/2005(INI), EP Plenary vote on September 9, 2015.

^{vii} www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/thepep/documents/D%C3%A9claration_de_Paris_EN.pdf

^{viii} Current examples range from a designated person within a ministry or an administration to a standalone organisation, such as the Fietsberaad (NL), the Cycling Embassy (DK) or the Fahrradakademie (DE).

^{ix} By means such as data collection, the coordination of a network of national focal points and practical publications.

^x For example, TEN-T Guidelines currently include the following wording: 'When implementing projects of common interest on the TEN-T, due consideration should be given to the particular circumstances of the individual project. Where possible, synergies with other policies should be exploited, for instance with tourism aspects by including on civil engineering structures such as bridges or tunnels bicycle infrastructure for long-distance cycling paths like the EuroVelo routes'.