

Danube Cycle Plans



**10 actions we can take together
to promote cycling!**



Robert Thaler • Member of THE PEP Bureau, former Chair of THE PEP and Head of Department Active Mobility and Mobility Management at the Austrian Federal Ministry of Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology

“At the fifth High Level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment held in Vienna in May 2021 46 ministers and state secretaries adopted the Vienna Declaration “Building forward better by transforming to new, clean, safe, healthy and inclusive mobility and transport”. With the Vienna Declaration the ministers adopted the first ever Pan-European Master Plan for Cycling Promotion, calling countries to acknowledge cycling as an equal mode of transport and double cycling in the region by 2030. With the Danube Cycle Plans project the partners succeeded in contributing to the implementation of the master plan. The project can be seen as a role model of how countries can be supported in implementing the recommendations of the pan-European Master Plan for Cycling Promotion.”

Willy Raimund • Environment Agency Austria, Lead Partner, Danube Cycle Plans

“Cycling is an important building block for healthy and sustainable mobility - also along the Danube! With the Danube Cycle Plans we paved the way to improve conditions for cyclists in the Danube region and contributed to the practical implementation of THE PEP Pan-European Master Plan for Cycling Promotion.”



Already at current levels, cycling produces global benefits of 150 billion euros per year within EU-28. To exploit these benefits nine Danube countries cooperating in the **Danube Cycle Plans project** agreed on the following common vision: More people cycling in the Danube region. This vision is supported by nine specific objectives and 24 actions clustered in nine main fields of action in the Danube Cycling Strategy. This brochure is a **call for action** to all relevant stakeholders to engage and implement the necessary actions on the international, national, regional and local level.



AUSTRIA | CZECHIA | SLOVAKIA | HUNGARY | BULGARIA
CROATIA | ROMANIA | SERBIA | SLOVENIA

1. Engage in your national cycling working group!

(National) Cycling Working Groups (NCWG) typically consist of representatives of all administrative levels (e.g. national, regional, local), the transport, health, environment and economic sector, umbrella organizations of cities and municipalities, cycling advocacy groups and NGOs, federal road and railway administrations, tourism stakeholders etc.

The NCWG structure needs four basic groups

- 1 | **Internal group at a ministry**, led by a Cycling Coordinator and cooperating with other cycling related departments. Links and tasks must be defined for every measure, together with available funds.
- 2 | **Interdisciplinary working group** with external organizations 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.
- 3 | **Politicians and public ambassadors**. They will conduct informed discussions with public, based on a quality strategic plan and data.
- 4 | **Citizens** must know that their participation in the process is more than desirable. A quality communication plan will help, in both the preparation and the implementation phases.

Find out whether there is a Cycling Working Group in your country (see Contacts: Action 10).

During the Danube Cycle Plans project in addition to the already existing National Cycling Working Groups in Austria, Czechia, Slovakia and Hungary, NCWGs were established in Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia.



Meeting of national cycling working groups in Serbia and Hungary, source: Danube Competence Center and Hungary (KTI)



Zoran Bukvić • Streets for Cyclists, Serbia

“For me, cycling is a way of life and a means of transport. It’s also a way to make our city a better place, a place for people and not cars, to get rid of all the noise and change the approach to spatial planning, convert parking spaces into green areas, so we can reduce overheating and air pollution. It’s not just about riding a bike and recreation, it’s a way to make our city a better place.”



2. Support stakeholders on the regional and local level!

Stakeholders are persons, groups or institutions whose needs and interests contribute to a problem situation (here: low bicycle use as everyday transport), at first undefined if positively or negatively. In (implementation) processes they articulate their needs and take over an entitled interest. They contribute to the definition and phrasing of the problem with their knowledge and skills, and are an important entity for the problem solution to evaluate the societal relevance and practicability of results.

The crucial stakeholders for cycling promotion identified in the framework of the Danube Cycle Plans project

Local/Regional level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local and regional public authorities • Interest groups incl. NGOs • Cycling advocacy groups
National level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministries with thematic linkages to cycling • Infrastructure providers • Police officers • Transportation planners • Public transport operators • Interest groups incl. NGOs • Cycling advocacy groups
International organisation under international law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • THE PEP (UNECE & WHO) • Relevant EU institutions • Interest groups and expert organizations (ECF etc) • Cycling advocacy groups

During the Danube Cycle Plans project the partners developed different formats for the involvement of crucial stakeholders (civil engineers, majors, etc.).

A marketing strategy developed in framework of the project defined among others the stakeholder inspiration scheme and the guideline for Danube cycling ambassadors.

Together with the experience of how to organize national cycling conferences this know-how will be useful for the implementation of regular meeting and exchange formats in all interested countries.



Goran Lepen • European Cyclists' Federation, Croatia

"For the past 70 years, road traffic has been dominated by cars. We need to invest a lot to change this situation. The road space has to be redistributed, to ensure equal treatment for all traffic users, not only cars, but also cyclists and pedestrians."



3. Help us to define investment necessities!

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 any strategic document aiming at the promotion of cycling. Experience shows that an adequate 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.

Examples from all around Europe show that depending on the level of cycling 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 the approx. 74 million people living in the nine participating countries, 740 million € up to 1,85 billion € per year would be an ambitious estimation of necessary spending .

To get a more profound estimation of necessary investments in cycling countries are recommended to elaborate National Investment Plans.

DANUBE CYCLING STRATEGY © recommends

- Elaborate national cycling investment plans
- Set up funding schemes to support local or regional authorities
- Access funds on international level to generate additional budgets for the promotion of cycling (EU Recovery and Resilience Plans, CEF TEN-T etc.)
- Raise awareness for the high total benefits of investments in cycling infrastructure



Investment Event, Brussels, October 13, 2022, source: Partnership for Urban Mobility Czechia



M#ariusz R#ev#esz • State Secretary for Active Hungary

“For those who don’t know which port they are headed to, no wind is favorable. This quote is from Seneca and I find this as a guideline for cycling policy as well: we need a vision, we need long-term targets to be able to select the appropriate operative actions and programmes.”

4. Benefit from investments in cycling infrastructure!

Cycling contributes to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals.



The Danube Cycle Plans project dedicated efforts to update current cost-benefit analysis techniques by a deeper consideration of cycling-related benefits. This has not only been summarized in a report but its first application was presented as part of an investment plan for better bicycle infrastructure in the Danube region.

The upgraded cost-benefit analysis (CBA) methodology takes into account benefits that are specific to cycling and not mentioned in the traditional methodology, like health benefits of regular cycling, the value of safer environment for cyclists, or the reduced parking space needed in urban environments. By missing out on these benefits, the real value of investments in cycling infrastructure can be underestimated, leading to less-than-optimal funding.



CLEAN AIR RESILIENCE HEALTH AND LIFESTYLE BENCHMARKING
 EFFICIENCY AND USE OF SPACE SAFETY



Leonore Gewessler • Federal Minister for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology, Austria

“As minister responsible for climate action, also transport is a huge task of mine. Our style of mobility has an enormous influence on greenhouse gas emissions.”



5. Provide information on cycle routes!

Information on the existing cycling infrastructure should allow cyclists to easily select the most appropriate route for their trips, regardless it is 5 km for daily commuting or a cycle tourist is planning a trip on cycle route(s) that passes multiple countries. Information provided should include the type of cycle infrastructure, the surface of the cycle route, the estimated traffic volume on the sections with no separated cycle infrastructure, the availability of e-bike charging and safe parking along the route, etc.

DANUBE CYCLING STRATEGY © recommends

- Provide qualitative and reliable information on cycle routes



EuroVelo signalisation in Serbia © Verracon



Ionut Maftai, Romania • Bike in Time, Romania

"I think we are pretty well as regards accommodation, gastronomy, historical and cultural spots but less in terms of their signage."



6. Monitor and use the data!

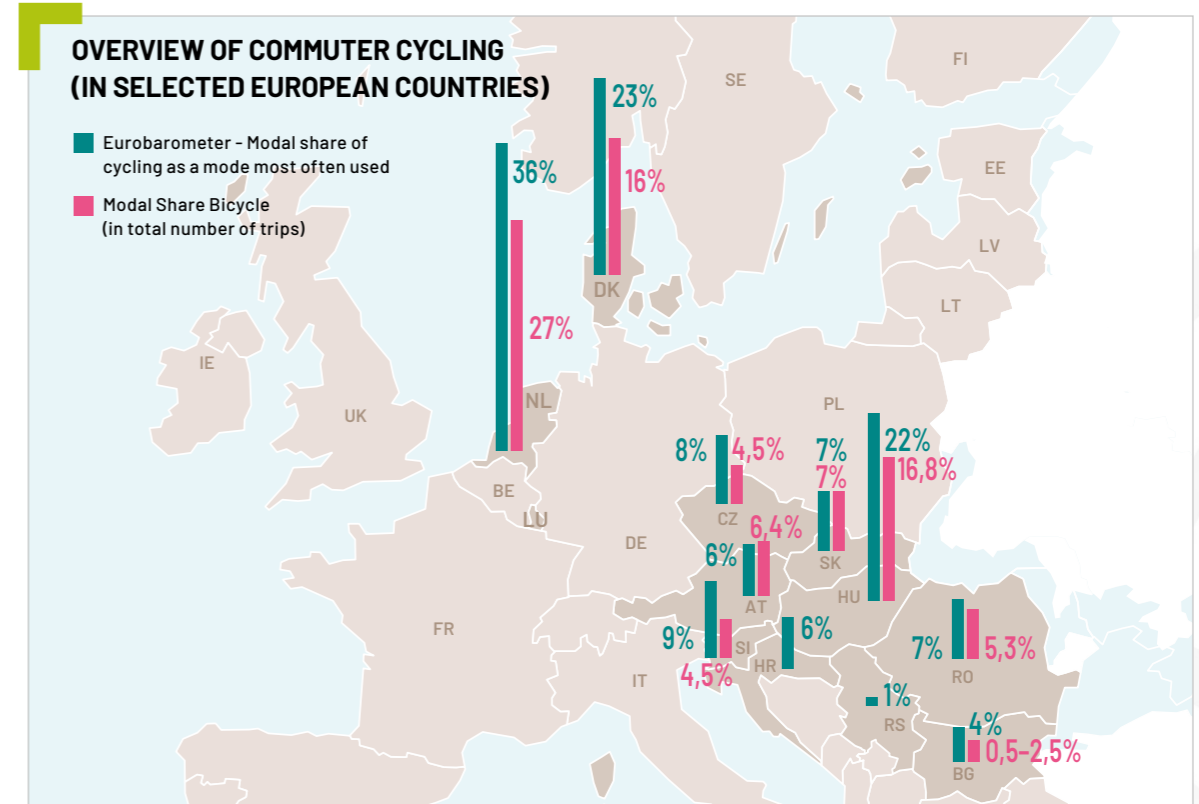
Statistical data are necessary to justify allocated budget to necessary cycling investments. For monitoring the impact of actions implemented it is necessary to collect comparable and reliable data before and after the interventions. Based on an evaluation of the existing data on regional, national, EU and pan-European level a minimum set of indicators should be defined, e.g. modal share of cycling or the frequency people use their bicycles, kilometres cycled/capita and year or minutes spent cycling on a typical day, the annual number of cyclist fatalities per kilometre cycled.

DANUBE CYCLING STRATEGY © recommends:

- Provide adequate and reliable statistical data for monitoring the level of cycling



Bike counting station in Vienna © Umweltbundesamt/B. Groeger



Source: Special Eurobarometer 422a - European Commission (12/2014), Danube Cycling Strategy - Danube Cycle Plans (12/2022)



Boris Bonev • member of the Sofia City Council, Bulgaria

“We know that cycling tourism is widely spread in Europe. And we lose the opportunity to have more sustainable ways to reach the interesting places.”



7. Improve the Image of Cycling by Campaigning!

There are several parameters which can be adjusted in order to affect behaviour and to change attitudes towards mobility. Apart from external and personal constraints or the travel distance, the choice of a mode of transport depends on the perceived availability of transport alternatives. Additionally, we are facing an evaluation of personal benefit versus personal cost if a pattern needs to be changed. Thus, the aim of promotion is to inform road users and raise awareness of all available mobility options, including the bicycle.

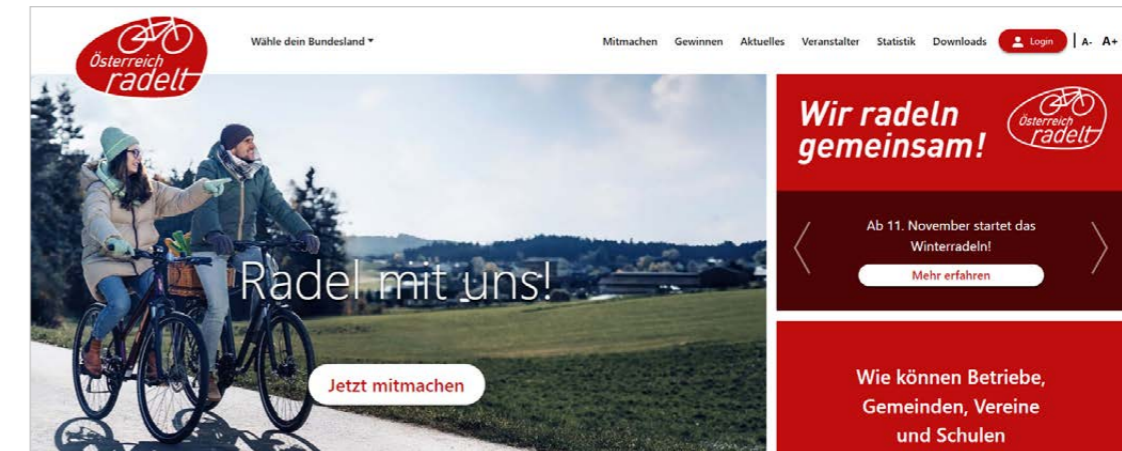
Especially in countries with limited cycling traditions raising awareness by implementing campaigns needs to be done continuously. Motivation to use bicycle instead of car should be based on a variety of materials and channels and could also address the population more generally.

Check the ongoing campaigns and consider your participation in it. Good practice examples are Bike to Work/Bike to School/Bike to Shop campaigns in the countries of the Danube Region, the Austrian cycling campaign (www.radelt.at/) or the campaign for mutual respect between drivers and cyclists (www.Damrespekt.cz/en) in Czechia.



DANUBE CYCLING STRATEGY © gives the following actions:

- Launch campaigns to promote cycling for daily commuting and leisure purposes
- Promote cycling by using role models
- Support training offers to enable various target groups to develop cycling skills



Österreich radelt, Austria (radelt.at)



Bike to Work Campaign Slovakia (dopracenabicykli.eu)
 Cycle Friendly Employer Certification, Romania (bike2work.ro)
 CityChangers Campaign, Czechia (citychangers.eu)



Andrej Doležal • Minister of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic

“Slovakia is very proud to be a part of Interreg Danube Cycle Plans project. Supporting of cycling and other alternative modes of transport is very important for us. At the Ministry of Transport we are supporting our national campaigns like Bike to Work or Bike to School that should help us to increase the share of cycling in our country.”



8. Implement cycle route networks!

Consistent, high quality cycle route networks on all levels incl. signalization, maintenance as well as the necessary information about the routes are a precondition for more people cycling in the Danube region.

What is DanuVelo?

Danube Cycle Routes Network (DanuVelo) consists of the core cycle route network in the Danube Region. It is based on EuroVelo and National Cycle Route Networks.

- Out of 37,714km of proposed network
 - 20% is „good enough“ (7,500km)
 - 22% „not enough“ (8,200km)

In the framework of the Danube Cycle Plans project the rough costs for the implementation of the DanuVelo cycle route network were estimated. The calculation is based on the highest level of National Cycle Route Networks defined by the project partners, their current infrastructure conditions (four categories: Good enough cycling infrastructure, Adjusting existing adequate roads, Construction improvement needed for existing service, forest and field roads and New cycling infrastructure needed) and an estimation of current costs for creating cycling infrastructure for each country.

The necessary amount of funding needed to complete the DanuVelo network has been estimated to be 5.2 billion €.

It has to be mentioned that these amount only covers the costs for the highest level of cycling infrastructure.



DanuVelo Network



Darko Trajanov • General Director of Sustainable Mobility and Transport Policy Directorate at the Ministry of Infrastructure, Slovenia

“In the past financial perspective, 2014-2020, we co-financed with European funds more than 160 projects in the field of cycling, among which I can mention about 500 kilometers of cycle routes. We also co-financed about 20 projects for setting up the public bike sharing system and over 200 new bicycle parking facilities.”



9. Share knowledge and increase institutional capacity!

Besides the necessary funds, the quantity and quality of staff being responsible for cycling is another crucial puzzle stone for improving the conditions for cyclists in the Danube region. Facilitating the exchange of know-how and experience at and between local, regional, national and transnational level is crucial for an efficient use of limited resources. Action needs to be set on all levels and requirements of different target groups need to be taken into account.

DANUBE CYCLING STRATEGY © recommends

- Establish knowledge centres for the training of professionals and enhancement of skills on national level and support the work of transnational knowledge centers
- Provide meeting and exchange formats on new developments in the promotion of cycling
- Establish training and education programmes for cycling in the Danube region



Cycling Education - BringaAkademia (www.bringaakademia.hu/en)



National Cycling Conference, May 17-18, 2022, Jihlava, Czechia



Jaroslav Miller • Deputy Minister of Education, former Rector of Palacky University in Olomouc, Czechia

"I would appreciate the voice of universities and all those think tanks. And of course, I would also appreciate the much louder voice of the community of people who live in those individual neighbourhoods of the cities."



10. Call for joint action / to join the team

Interested in cooperation on the national level?

Get in touch with your national cycling coordinator or the leader of the National Cycling Working Group.

National cycling officers/coordinators



AT | Martin EDER
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PLEASE NOTE: The contacts refer to leaders of the National Cycling Working Groups and organizations that were authors of the National Cycling Strategies.

Interested in cooperation on the international level?

If you would like to join the work of the **Partnership Active Mobility** to implement the **Pan-European Master Plan for Cycling Promotion** or support the elaboration of the new **Pan-European Master Plan Walking** which is currently under development, please get in touch with a.friedwagner@verracon.at.



Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP)

The **Pan-European Master Plan for Cycling Promotion** of THE PEP provided the framework for the cooperation in the Danube Cycle Plans project. By successfully implementing the project activities and achieving the expected project outputs, the Danube Cycle Plans project supports the implementation of the recommendations summarized in the master plan.

Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) is a unique intergovernmental, cross-sectoral, tripartite policy platform for policy-makers and stakeholders of the countries of the pan-European region for achieving healthy and sustainable transport and mobility.

Established in 2002 and serviced jointly by the **United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)** and the **World Health Organization (WHO)** Regional Office for Europe, THE PEP is driven by the political commitments of the Member States through a series of High-level Meetings on Transport, Health and Environment, which convenes every five to six years.



The **Fifth High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment** held in Vienna in May 2021 was hosted by the Austrian government. It brought together 46 ministers and state secretaries, and more than 850 participants from 42 Member States. At this meeting the **Vienna Declaration “Building forward better by transforming to new, clean, safe, healthy and inclusive mobility and transport”** was adopted by the ministers.



Meeting of THE PEP Partnership Active Mobility, Ljubljana, June 2022

More information

- **Danube Cycle Plans project**
<https://www.interreg-danube.eu/danube-cycle-plans>
- **Transport, Health, Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP)**
<http://thepep.unece.org>
- Recommendations from the **Pan-European Master Plan for Cycling Promotion** adopted by 46 ministers from 41 countries in Vienna, May 2021.
<https://thepep.unece.org/node/825>
- The **toolbox of best available practices** from the countries of the pan-European region elaborated by the members of THE PEP Partnership Active Mobility
<https://thepep.unece.org/node/826>



Final Conference of the Danube Cycle Plans project, Prague, October 2022



Danube Cycling Strategy
Download here:



DANUBE CYCLE PLANS:
10 actions we can take together to promote cycling! | December 2022
Text: Environment Agency Austria, Partnership for Urban Mobility