

EuroVelo

Annual Report

2023

EuroVelo General Meeting 2024

European Cyclists' Federation



[EuroVelo.com](https://www.eurovelo.com)



Introduction

EuroVelo continued its steady growth and work in 2023 towards the ambitious goals of the EuroVelo Strategy 2030.

The transnational coordination of EuroVelo focused on consolidating and promoting EuroVelo as a brand and cycle route network, demonstrating its impact with data, bringing the community together with a successful EuroVelo & Cycling Tourism Conference in Izmir, advocating for EuroVelo and cycling tourism and, last but not least, strengthening the internal capacity on EuroVelo within ECF.

The growth of EuroVelo is strongly supported by national and regional developments in improving cycling infrastructure, implementing EuroVelo signage, developing national EuroVelo websites and national cycling-friendly schemes, and advocating for better conditions for multimodal accessibility. This annual report focuses on the transnational activities of EuroVelo, but it is important to remember the pivotal role of local initiatives in making the European cycle route network a reality and National EuroVelo Coordination Centres.

The ambition of the EuroVelo Strategy 2030 of completing the network is achievable but would require an increased pace. We are on track and committed to increasing our efforts alongside our many supportive partners!

IN A NUTSHELL



60,000+

Kilometres of EuroVelo routes are developed and ready to cycle as of 2023



270+

Participants at the EuroVelo & Cycling Tourism Conference 2023 in Izmir



11%

Increased traffic on EuroVelo routes from January to September 2023 compared to 2019



2.5 million

Number of web sessions on EuroVelo.com in 2023

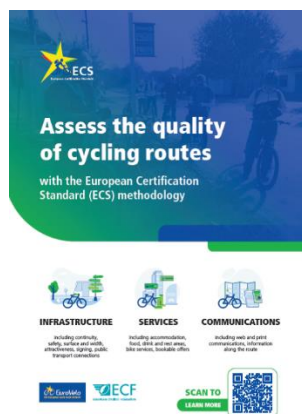
Consolidating and promoting EuroVelo as a brand and cycle route network

Two publications have contributed to consolidating EuroVelo as a brand in 2023: the new edition of the EuroVelo Overview Map, published in March 2023 and launched during ITB Berlin, contributing to a large growth in EuroVelo donations; and the [EuroVelo Brand Guide](#), aiming at providing guidance on how to make use of the EuroVelo brand and increase its visibility.



EuroVelo.com remained the main promotional tool for the European cycle route network in 2023, with an annual campaign to update its contents thanks to contributions from National EuroVelo Coordination Centres (NECCs) and a growing audience. After releasing the GPX tracks download feature in 2022, the [AtlanticOnBike Interreg project extension](#) enabled the launch of a much-awaited digital feature on EuroVelo.com: a [route planner](#). The tool allows users to plan their trip on EuroVelo routes, add intermediate destinations, personalise the search, and download the GPX tracks.

New features related to GPX tracks on EuroVelo.com are made possible thanks to the EuroVelo Team's daily management of the GIS Database, with the support of NECCs providing updated data every year. The EuroVelo GIS subgroup met three times in 2023, with high attendance from NECCs, to discuss data sharing strategies and how to improve the quality of EuroVelo data.



To address the quality of long-distance cycle routes, the EuroVelo Team continued developing the [European Certification Standard](#) methodology, with a promotional [leaflet](#) published in February, a Refresher and [EuroVelo Route Inspectors' Training](#) organised respectively in February and April 2023, and licenses for applying the methodology in Austria and Japan.

In 2023, two route extensions were officially included in EuroVelo, adding almost 500 km to the network: the extension of [EuroVelo 3 – Pilgrims Route](#) in Galicia, Spain, from Santiago de Compostela to Cape Finisterre; and the second part of [EuroVelo 14 – Waters of Central Europe](#) eastwards, up to Debrecen in Hungary.

On the occasion of World Tourism Day on 27 September, ECF announced a new candidate route to join the EuroVelo network by 2028 at the latest: the [Iberian Cycle Route, the future EuroVelo 16](#). It will connect Lisbon to Pamplona via Madrid, passing through vibrant cities and rural landscapes. The addition of this cycle route hopes to contribute to tackling depopulation issues in the Iberian Peninsula by promoting sustainable and slow tourism.

[EuroVelo 13 – Iron Curtain Trail](#) was re-certified as [Cultural Route](#) of the Council of Europe in 2023, following a demanding process coordinated by ECF and involving NECCs of the countries traversed by EuroVelo 13 and specific contacts for this route. It is the only EuroVelo and cycling route since 2019 to have been certified, along with 47 other Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.

Two publications were released in 2023 to provide guidance on long-distance cycle routes: the [EuroVelo Transnational Signing Manual](#) and the [Transnational Guidance Document on Rest Areas](#). Those publications were prepared in the framework of the AtlanticOnBike project extension, co-funded by the Interreg Atlantic Area Programme.



Demonstrating the impact of EuroVelo and cycling tourism in Europe with data

The EuroVelo Team continued to collect and publish data about route development, communications, and route usage as part of the ongoing development of the [EuroVelo Data Hub](#), launched in 2021. Three reports were published in 2023:

- First edition of a [EuroVelo Usage Monitoring Report](#) in May 2023 with analysis and graphs on bicycle counting data, in partnership with Eco-Counter
- First edition of a [EuroVelo Digital Statistics Report](#) in June 2023, including web statistics and social media and newsletter statistics for the first time
- Third edition of the [EuroVelo Route Development Status Report 2022-2023](#) published in September 2023, in a new and more attractive format and with a clear statement '2% more developed EuroVelo network in 2023, but the growth should increase faster!'.

EuroVelo Route Development Status Report (2023)



KEY EUROVELO NUMBERS

Total length of EuroVelo: 92,000+ km

The 17 EuroVelo routes represent a network of 92,820 km across Europe! This is a small reduction compared to 2022 due to more accurate data, even though the EuroVelo network counts almost 500 km of new routes in 2023, following the addition of EuroVelo 3 – pilgrims' route extension in Galicia (Spain), and the second part of EuroVelo 14 – Waters of Central Europe in Hungary.

66% (60,000+ km) of the EuroVelo network is ready to cycle

This is the percentage of EuroVelo routes that are either certified, developed with EuroVelo signs, or developed. There are now 60,785 km of EuroVelo routes waiting to be discovered, including 8 routes developed at 75% or more. This is an increase of 2% compared to 2022*. Developed routes can be heterogeneous in terms of quality of infrastructure (i.e. route component type, width, surface, gradient, etc.) and some would require improvements.

34% (32,000+ km) of EuroVelo routes to develop by 2030

A third of the EuroVelo network is still to be developed (under development or at the planning stage). Improving those parts of the network is a priority to complete EuroVelo by 2030. ECF is working in partnership with a growing network of NECCs across Europe to achieve this ambitious goal. Responsible authorities would need to develop around 4,500 km of EuroVelo per year to reach this objective, meaning that the yearly increase of newly developed sections should grow to 5% instead of 2%. Ultimately, sections of the EuroVelo network may be removed if no sufficient developments are realistically foreseen.

37% (33,000+ km) of the network with EuroVelo signs in 24 countries

EuroVelo signs can be followed on 37% of the network, meaning about 33,965 km of EuroVelo signposting is already in place. 24 countries have implemented at least a part of EuroVelo signs at a national level, that is 83% of all countries with a EuroVelo route. EuroVelo signposting is essential for cyclists to easily find their way from one country to another.

TOP ROUTES AND COUNTRIES

Top 5 Routes in terms of Levels of development

1. EuroVelo 15 – Rhine Cycle Route
2. EuroVelo 17 – Rhone Cycle Route
3. EuroVelo 19 – Meuse Cycle Route
4. EuroVelo 14 – Waters of Central Europe
5. EuroVelo 1 – Atlantic Coast Route

Top 3 Routes in terms of Quality increase since 2022 in % of the whole length

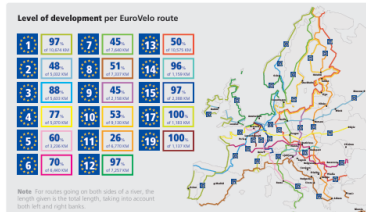
1. EuroVelo 5 – Via Romea (Francigena) +11%
2. EuroVelo 6 – Atlantic-Black Sea +3%
3. EuroVelo 9 – Baltic-Adriatic +3%

Top 5 Countries in terms of Levels of development

1. Switzerland
2. France
3. Belgium
4. Estonia
5. Republic of Ireland

Top 3 Countries in terms of Quality increase since 2022 in % of the network

1. Greece +6% (+83km)
2. Hungary +5% (+382km)
3. Italy +5% (+237km)



* In these calculations, the total length of EuroVelo routes has been rounded up to the nearest km. EuroVelo routes are counted twice if they belong to several EuroVelo routes. This is a different approach compared to the EuroVelo Route Development Status Reports 2022 and 2021, where the calculations were based on the total without duplicate routes. This must be kept in mind when comparing the numbers.

Bringing the community together at the EuroVelo & Cycling Tourism Conference

The EuroVelo & Cycling Tourism Conference 2023 took place in Izmir, Türkiye, from 11 to 13 October. Around 270 cycling, tourism, and heritage professionals gathered in this historic city to exchange ideas and knowledge under the theme 'Cycling: A new perspective on heritage'. Over 50 speakers from 17 countries shared their expertise and discussed ideas on topics such as the politics and future of cycling tourism, nature conservation, marketing tools to promote cycling and heritage, and many more.



The conference was opened by the Minister of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Türkiye, Mehmet Nuri Ersoy. Further highlights included a dinner in the Ancient Smyrna Agora with an inspiring speech by the Mayor of Izmir, Mustafa Tunç Soyer, a cyclist himself, and an opportunity to explore EuroVelo 8 – Mediterranean Route on bicycles as part of a technical visit. The host city of the 2024 EuroVelo & Cycling Tourism Conference was announced in Izmir: Viborg. The Danish city will welcome the EuroVelo community from 23 to 25 September 2024. The city – a key meeting point along the ancient Danish route Hærvejen, now part of EuroVelo 3 – promises to host another memorable conference.

Representing and advocating for EuroVelo and cycling tourism

The European Commission released its European Declaration on Cycling for interinstitutional consultation in October 2023, following a European Parliament Resolution in February, which included multiple mentions of EuroVelo. The [Commission's declaration intersects with EuroVelo and cycling tourism](#) at multiple levels: it contains commitments to “significantly increasing safe and coherent cycling infrastructure across Europe” and “working towards creating a coherent cycling network in cities and improving connectivity between suburban and rural areas and city centres, including cycle highways”. It also includes a chapter on multimodality and cycling tourism, which recognises “cycling as a sustainable means of recreation and tourism”.



From 2022, ECF joined the [group of experts on cycling infrastructure module](#) initiated by the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) following THE PEP Master Plan for Cycling Promotion. The main contribution of EuroVelo to this group has been contributing to discussions on a UNECE trans-European cycle route network based on national networks, which should take EuroVelo as a backbone when relevant, include long-distance routes and enable cross-border connectivity. Where they exist, national cycle route networks are the key for UN Member States to plan prioritised trans-national cycling corridors. As some Member States do not yet have one, the group has been working on a guide to assist in the designation of national cycle route networks. 25 years of EuroVelo expertise in defining European cycling corridors, together with the experience from Member States investing in the development of EuroVelo and national cycle routes, have been valuable input into this work.

ECF lobbied for greater recognition of active modes and for EuroVelo in the [Trans-European Transport Network \(TEN-T\)](#) in the negotiations for its revised regulation in 2023. Following the publication of the European Commission proposal in 2021 and the adoption of the Council of the EU general approach in December 2022, the [TRAN Committee of the EU Parliament adopted its position](#) in April 2023. In general, the proposals of the three institutions clearly recognise the need to consider active mobility when planning, implementing and operating the infrastructure for long-distance transport: a significant step forward compared to the previous regulation. Integrating EuroVelo officially as an additional network of the TEN-T did not attract enough support, but clearer references to the European cycle route network have been discussed. The [revised TEN-T regulation](#) was adopted in April 2024.

Another goal is to elevate cycling tourism and EuroVelo to the political tourism agenda. In 2023, ECF participated in “Together for EU Tourism” stakeholder events organised by the European Commission’s DG GROW and followed up on the [Memorandum of Understanding with UNWTO](#).

Strengthening the internal capacity of EuroVelo within ECF

The [EuroVelo General Meeting 2023](#), held in Izmir and online on 11 October, was the largest to date, with all National EuroVelo Coordination Centres (NECCs) registered alongside four observer organisations. Aside from sharing the latest news regarding the development of the network and hearing about the achievements and challenges of our NECCs, we were delighted to welcome the Centre for Environment (CZZS) as the National EuroVelo Coordinator for Bosnia and Herzegovina. This new member brings the [total number of NECCs to 24](#) and will contribute to increasing EuroVelo and cycling tourism in the Western Balkans. The EuroVelo Team also continued sending NECC Broadcasts to provide targeted information every other month

and organising workshops to share knowledge and experiences (four in 2023 on the EuroVelo map, Brand Guide, EU funding opportunities and websites and on our “spring clean” of the website).



During the EuroVelo General Meeting, Karine Dupuy, CEO of France Vélo Tourisme, was elected as a member of the [EuroVelo Council](#). She replaces Camille Thomé, Vélo & Territoires’ Director, who was a member of the Council for 12 years. There are currently eight seats on the EuroVelo Council, which represents NECCs and the wider EuroVelo community while providing strategic guidance to the ECF Board and the EuroVelo Team.



The [EuroVelo Team](#) continued to handle the daily management of the transnational coordination of EuroVelo in 2023 with six staff members and two skilled and motivated interns per year. Marta Orihuel left the team in January 2023 and was replaced by Jessica Casagrande on EuroVelo Communications and NECCs. Alexandra Fournier, former EuroVelo intern, became EuroVelo and Projects Coordinator to support on projects and ECS from January 2023.

ECF works with national and regional partners to further develop and promote certain routes at the transnational level through the framework of EuroVelo Route Partnerships (formerly known as LTMAAs, or Long-Term Management Agreements). In 2023, these included Partnerships for [EuroVelo 1 – Atlantic Coast Route](#), [EuroVelo 8 – Mediterranean Route](#), [EuroVelo 15 – Rhine Cycle Route](#) and [EuroVelo 19 – Meuse Cycle Route](#). Specific actions are implemented on those routes to increase their visibility and transnational coordination, thanks to a dedicated budget to which all partners contribute. Renewal discussions for EuroVelo 1, 8 and 15 Partnerships took place as the 2021-2023 Partnerships came to an end, whereas EuroVelo 19 Partnership had been renewed for the period 2022-2024.

EuroVelo continues to benefit from EU funding. The one-year extension of the [AtlanticOnBike project](#) ended in June 2023 with a final meeting in Bayonne, France. ECF is a project partner of two new EuroVelo-related Interreg projects that started in 2023: ICTr, Interreg Central Europe project focusing on EuroVelo 13 – Iron Curtain Trail, and [Baltic Biking Upgrade](#), Interreg South-Baltic Area project focusing on EuroVelo 10 – Baltic Sea Cycle Route.



2023 marked a record-breaking year for EuroVelo donations since the system was launched in 2015. The launch of the brand-new, first-of-its-kind EuroVelo Calendar 2024 in November and the new edition of the EuroVelo Overview Map in March, as well as the release of the new and improved EuroVelo cycling jerseys in late 2022, laid the foundations for this encouraging development.

The commercial side of EuroVelo was further developed in 2023, supported by a [Business Opportunities manual](#). This helped boost awareness of the possibilities to advertise on the EuroVelo platforms and partner with us. In 2023, 80 bookable offers in total were visible on our [Bookable Offer search engine](#).

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