

EuroVelo, the European cycle route network

Press Pack

European Cyclists' Federation

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EuroVelo Route 11 - Hungary

Ever dreamed of travelling across an entire continent on your own steam? Thanks to EuroVelo, a project of the European Cyclists' Federation, cycling across Europe is not only possible, but safe, attractive and comfortable too. A network of 16 transcontinental routes, stretching from the Atlantic to the Black Sea, the Arctic to the Mediterranean, each one has something new to offer.

Whether it is cycling beside the romantic Rhine as it sweeps through Germany; crossing stunning Alpine passes and tunnels; or riding all the way to the land of the northern lights, Europe offers endless attractions, all easily accessible by bike.

Read on for more information about EuroVelo and cycle tourism in Europe more generally, including the organisations working to complete the network by 2020; the requirements for approved long distance routes, and answers to our most frequently asked questions.

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Overview

1.1. The EuroVelo network

EuroVelo is the European cycle route network – a network of 16 long distance cycle routes that connect the whole continent. The network is developed and coordinated by the European Cyclists' Federation (ECF) and it is envisaged that the network will be substantially complete by 2020. The routes can be used by long-distance cycle tourists, as well as by local people making daily journeys.

1.2. EuroVelo Routes

The 16 EuroVelo routes are each arranged according to a theme and given an odd or even route number depending on their direction – they are as follows:

North – South Routes

- 1- Atlantic Coast Route : North Cape – Caminha 9,110 km
- 3- Pilgrims' Route : Trondheim – Santiago de Compostela 5,122 km
- 5- Via Romea Francigena : London – Rome, Birindisi 3,900 km
- 7 – Sun Route: North Cape – Malta 7,409 km
- 9 – Baltic – Adriatic: Gdansk – Pula 1,930 km
- 11 – East Europe Route: North Cape – Athens 5,984 km
- 13 – Iron Curtain Trail: Barents Sea – Black Sea 10,400 km
- 15 – Rhine Cycle Route: Andermatt – Hoek van Holland 1,320 km
- 17 – Rhone Cycle Route: Andermatt – Mediterranean 1,115 km
- 19 – Meuse Cycle Route: Pouilly-en-Bassigny – Hoek van Holland 1,152 km

West – East Routes

- 2 – Capitals Route: Galway – Moscow 5,500 km
- 4 – Central Europe Route: Roscoff – Kiev 4,000 km
- 6 – Atlantic – Black Sea: Nantes – Constanta 4,448km
- 8 – Mediterranean Route: Cádiz – Athens and Cyprus 5,888 km

Circuits

- 10 – Baltic Sea Cycle Route: 7,980 km
- 12 – North Sea Cycle Route: 5,932 km

Total network: Over 70,000 km



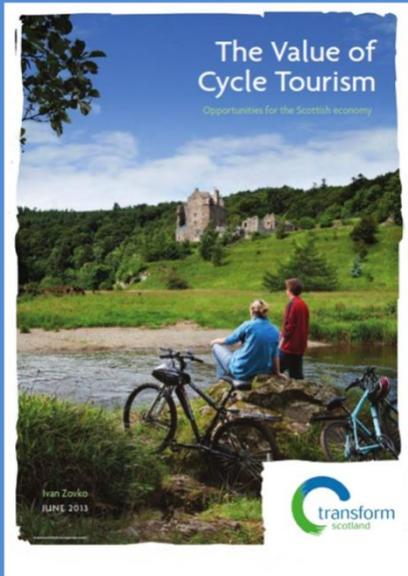
The 16 EuroVelo Routes

1.3. Cycle tourism market

There are an estimated **2.3 billion cycle tourism trips in Europe** every year with a value in excess of **€44 billion**, according to a 2012 study commissioned by the European Parliament. 20.4 million cycle tourists stay one or more nights en route, and these 'overnight' tourists spend around €9 billion annually.

If EuroVelo is fully developed as a European transport and tourism network by 2020, the study estimated that it would see 60 million trips made every year, generating a total of €7 billion in direct annual revenue. ¹

National example:



Scotland, UK

The Scottish government commissioned a study called The Value of Cycle Tourism, which was published in June 2013.

It tried to estimate various economic benefits (p.a.) related to cycle tourism:

- Health Benefits: £4 m
- Cycle-related events: £5.6 m
- Leisure cycle-related infrastructure: £1.5 m
- Expenditure of Leisure Cyclists: £106.2 - £228.2 m

The total economic contribution: £117.4 - £239.3 m (or €137.2 – 279.6 m)

Local example:



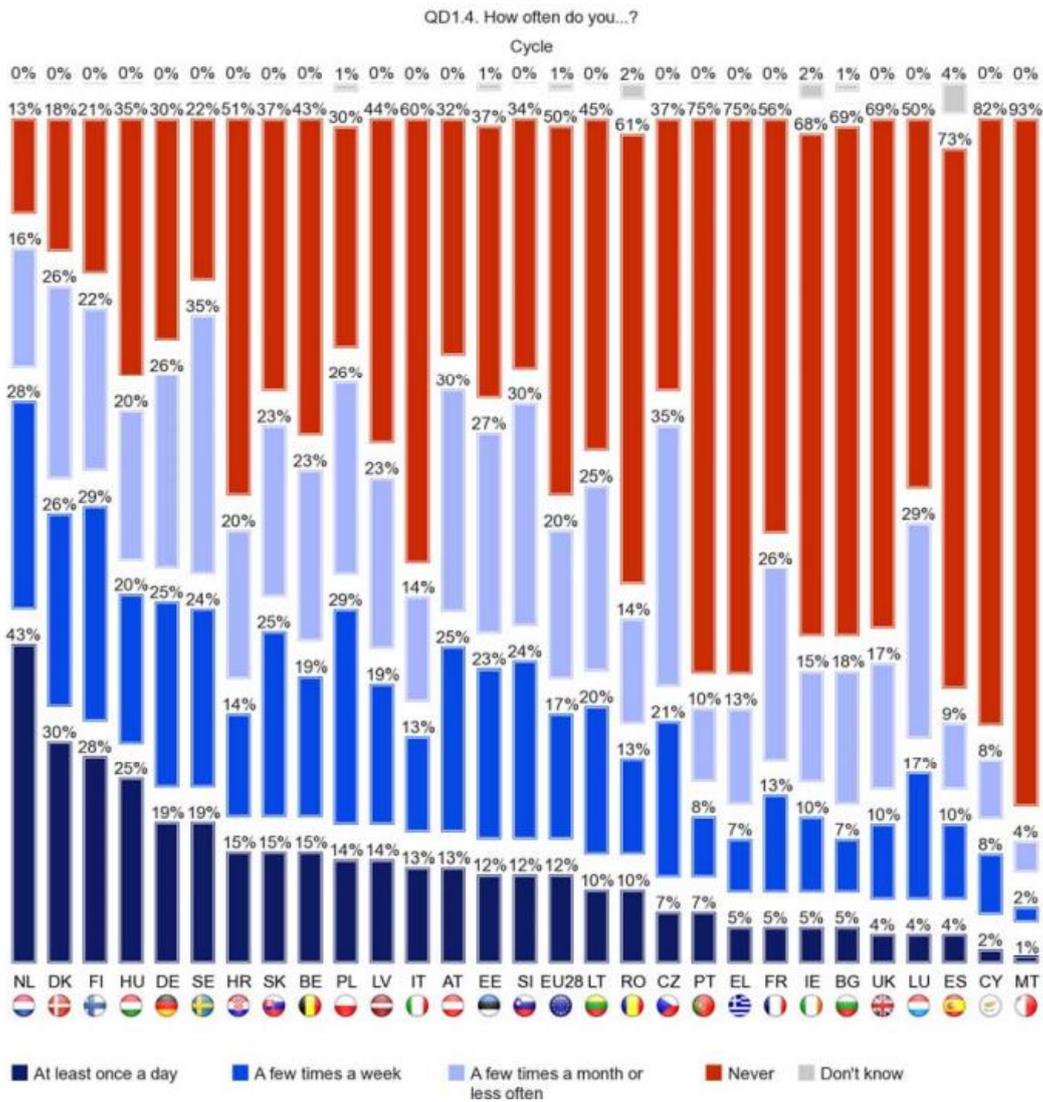
Great Western Greenway, Republic of Ireland

A 43km former railway line re-opened as a cycle path in 2011. Part of EuroVelo 1 – Atlantic Coast Route.

- Cost approx. €6 million
 - 145,000 visitors in 2011
 - 175,000 visitors in 2012
 - 200,000 visitors expected in 2013
- Created 38 new jobs and helped secure 56 existing jobs.
- Led to new developments such as a gourmet trail, an adventure sports trail and a Greenway artists' group.
- The value to the local economy is estimated at €7.2 million a year and rising.

1.4. Cycling in Europe

The 2013 Eurobarometer study on 'Attitudes of Europeans toward Urban Mobility'ⁱⁱ found that 49% per cent of European Union citizens use a bicycle on a regular basis (see below). As the above graph shows, these statistics vary hugely from country to country, with 87% in the Netherlands and only 7% in Malta. A key advantage of the European Cycle Route Network is the introduction of consistent, high-quality cycle infrastructure across all European countries, supporting these citizens by making their journeys safer and more enjoyable.



2. Co-ordination and organisation

2.1. The ECF and EuroVelo

The ECF coordinates the EuroVelo network on a European level.

ECF's objectives for the EuroVelo project are:

- to ensure the implementation of very high quality European-grade cycle routes in all countries of Europe, to carry the best European practice across borders and as such harmonise standards.
- to communicate the existence of these routes to decision makers and potential users, to promote and market their use, and to provide an important port of call for information about cycling in Europe.
- in this way, to encourage large numbers of European citizens to give cycling a try, and in doing so promote a shift to healthy and sustainable travel – for daily trips and cycling tourism.

The highest decision-making body is the **ECF Board**. In 2007, they established the **ECF EuroVelo Council** to act as an advisory body for the ECF in implementation and operation of EuroVelo. The EuroVelo Council meets twice annually. The day-to-day work of coordinating the EuroVelo network on the European level is carried out by the **ECF EuroVelo Management Team** based in the ECF's Brussels offices.

EuroVelo is a registered trade mark of ECF, and only routes approved by the ECF have the right to call themselves EuroVelo; this is an important mark of quality for both the cyclist and the route promoter (see section 3).

2.2. National EuroVelo Coordination Centres and Coordinators

The network of National EuroVelo Coordination Centres and Coordinators (NECC/Cs), found across the continent, is vitally important to the success of EuroVelo. Coordinators ensure the implementation, operation and quality assurance of EuroVelo at a national level. In addition, they are responsible for communicating EuroVelo nationally, providing accurate and up-to-date information on the sections of EuroVelo routes that pass through their area and ensure the integration of EuroVelo routes into new publications.

The different titles – Coordination Centre and Coordinator – refer to the maturity of the organisation. National EuroVelo Coordinators typically consist of one organization, often (but not always) one of the national cycling federations. Over time, the Coordinator might incorporate representatives from public authorities,

tourism boards, cycling organisations, public transport companies and other service providers in order to create a Coordination Centre. The exact composition will inevitably vary from country to country.

To contact your country's NECC/C please use the details available on our website - <http://www.eurovelo.org/euroveloorganisation/coordination-centres/centres/>



3. EuroVelo routes – a mark of quality

3.1. General requirements

All EuroVelo routes should fulfill the following criteria:

- Based on existing or planned national or regional routes of the involved countries.
- Involving at least two countries.
- Route length must be at least 1,000 km (620 miles).
- Steep sections should be avoided wherever possible and for very steep sections (if unavoidable) alternative transport options (i.e. public transport or alternative routes) should be provided.
- Easy to communicate - internationally recognisable identity and name (marketing potential).
- Implementation plans in place (project plan, business plan, partners).
- Signage in accordance with the regulations of the respective nations and/or regions, continuous and in both directions.
- Signage supplemented by EuroVelo route information panels, in accordance with the ECF's *Signing of EuroVelo cycle routes* manual: http://www.eurovelo.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/EuroVelo_Signing1.pdfⁱⁱⁱ

3.2. Route Infrastructure

The current share of route infrastructure components in the EuroVelo network is as follows:

- Traffic-free asphalted road: 8%
- Traffic-free non-asphalted road: 6%
- Public low-traffic, asphalted road: 56%
- Public non-asphalted road: 3%
- Public high-traffic, asphalted road: 14%

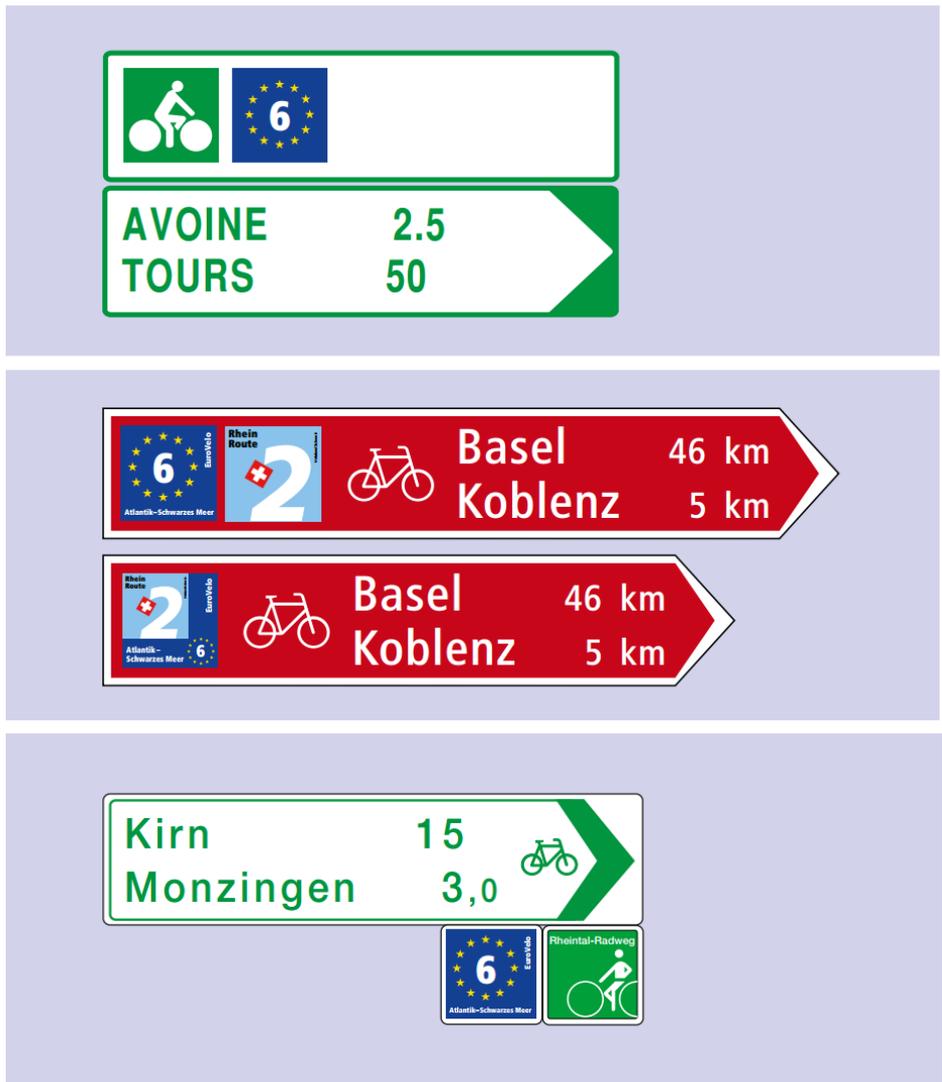
In accordance with the general requirements for EuroVelo routes, priority sections for improvement of the network are those on either non-asphalted or high-traffic, asphalted roads (currently 17% of the total network).

3.3. Signposting

The effective promotion of cycling tourism in Europe requires routes to be signed in a manner that can be understood by international and national users, in order to ensure the safe conduct of cyclists in traffic. It is thus essential that the signing of cycle routes is consistent and clearly recognizable.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) in cooperation with the ECF has therefore produced a recommendation for the signing of EuroVelo routes, which forms the basis of the ECF's Signing of EuroVelo cycle routes manual: iv

EuroVelo signage can be incorporated within existing national signage systems as demonstrated in the examples below from EuroVelo 6:



Examples:

France

Switzerland

Germany



Hungary

Serbia

3.4. Services

Cycle-friendly services are a key resource for guaranteeing the comfort and enjoyment of cyclists on long distance routes. The promotion of labels or marks of quality for cycle-friendly services is encouraged by our National EuroVelo Coordinators and Coordination centres. Several such schemes are now well established in different European countries:



3.5. Transport Connections

One of the many benefits of cycle tourism is that it typically has very little impact on the environment. What impact it does have can be reduced even further if you travel to and from your cycle trip by public transport.

Taking your bike to your trip by train is the ideal combination for environmentally friendly mobility in both short and long-distance trips. Most locations in Europe are accessible by train, and EuroVelo routes are planned and certified taking accessible rail connections into account.

Booking online in advance gives you access to the cheapest fares, and also allows you to check if your train has specific facilities for carrying bikes.

You can book online at Deutsche Bahn - www.bahn.de; Schweizer Bundesbahn - <http://www.sbb.ch/>; and SNCF www.sncf.com/; amongst many others.

3.6. Promotion and Communication

3.6.1. Web

3.6.1.1. EuroVelo.com

Launched in March 2013 and updated in June 2019 to a new and more interactive version, www.EuroVelo.com promotes the EuroVelo network and provides the most up-to-date information available to touring cyclists planning their trip. Users can browse the website either by the country they are interested in cycling or by the route that they would like to take. The site is a central hub which aims to link users to more specific information on routes, maps and guidebooks, services and bookable offers, as available on national or route-specific websites. The news section features different parts of the network each month and tells the stories of cyclists who have already ridden EuroVelo, aiming to inspire others.

3.6.1.2. EuroVelo.org

EuroVelo.org aims to connect and inform the many professionals working across Europe on EuroVelo projects. It includes a news section providing updates on current construction projects and recent developments in the coordination of routes; examples of best practices, official EuroVelo manuals and guidance ready for downloading, as well as the overview route database, where National EuroVelo coordinators can update data about specific sections of their routes.

3.6.1.3. Social Media

EuroVelo is active on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, in addition to distributing a monthly newsletter.

Facebook – <http://www.facebook.com/eurovelo>

Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/ecfeurovelo/>

Twitter – <http://www.twitter.com/ECFEuroVelo>

Newsletter sign-up - <http://eepurl.com/ivrxY>

3.6.1.4. Photo Gallery

Pictures from the EuroVelo network are available on Instagram and on our Flickr page: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/eurovelo/>

3.6.2. Publications

Official EuroVelo manuals and guidance are available to download from the [eurovelo.org](http://www.eurovelo.org) website - <http://www.eurovelo.org/downloads/guidelines/>

4. Contact us

For general enquiries please contact eurovelo@ecf.com

5. Frequently asked questions

What is the best route for me?

EuroVelo offers a wide variety of routes for all types of cyclists. Whether for a day out or a 3-month expedition, our website will help you find the perfect trip. <http://www.eurovelo.com/en/eurovelos>

I'd like to try a long-distance, self-supported tour for the first time. Which route should I choose?

Our most popular route, with full signposting between France and Serbia, and with detailed mapping available throughout, *EuroVelo 6 –Atlantic-Black Sea* is the perfect choice for a first long-distance tour. Passing through 10 countries over its 4,448 km (2,764 miles) length, the route follows three of Europe's major rivers – the Loire, the Rhine and the Danube. This naturally flat topography, combined with the highest quality cycling infrastructure, ensures a safe and pleasant ride.

I'm interested in Europe's history. Which route should I choose?

Many EuroVelo routes incorporate a historical theme – EuroVelo routes 3 and 5 follow ancient pilgrims' trails and EuroVelo 2 links some of Europe's great capital cities. For the most poignant reminder of Europe's recent history we recommend following *EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail*, along the border which divided the

continent between East and West for half a century. EuroVelo 13 is also the longest trans-Europe route, at 10,400 km (6,462 miles).

I am travelling with my family. Which route should I choose?

If you are travelling with young kids, then look no further than *EuroVelo 15 – Rhine Cycle Route*.

At 1,320 km (820 miles), the entire route is very manageable in a month-long summer holiday. In this time, you will follow the Rhine through four countries from source to sea, taking in some magnificent scenery on the way. The route was the first to be awarded the European Route Certification Standard, ensuring an exemplary level of infrastructure throughout.

Where can I find out what parts of the network are complete?

In many cases, substantial sections of EuroVelo routes are already complete and signposted, but gaps in high-quality infrastructure still exist. Our website <http://www.eurovelo.com/en/eurovelos> provides a colour-coded overview of each route itinerary. Yellow (realised) sections are cycle routes with signposting in both directions. Red (realised) sections are cycle routes fully developed and signposted according to national or regional standards, but not yet with the EuroVelo signs. Dashed red (not realised) sections are undergoing work to meet EuroVelo standards but follow existing cycle infrastructure. Dotted red (planned) sections are still in the route planning phase.

Where can I find maps and guidebooks?

On the EuroVelo website, each route pages provides links to maps and guidebooks available for download or purchase on external websites.

Maps are currently available from many online sources including [Amazon](#), [Sustrans](#), [Fietsvakantiewinkel](#), [Adfc](#) and [France Velo Tourisme](#)

An overview map of EuroVelo routes is available [online](#) or in paper form by contacting your national coordinator. It is also possible to [make a donation](#) of 15€ or more to EuroVelo to receive a printed version of the EuroVelo map.

Who came up with the idea of EuroVelo?

EuroVelo was first conceived at a meeting between the ECF and its British and Danish partners (Sustrans and *de Frie Fugle*) in 1995. The original plan was to create 12 long-distance cycle routes. Since August 2007, the ECF has assumed full responsibility for the coordination of the project, leading to greater international recognition of the value of these routes.

Why is there no EuroVelo 14 or 16?

Routes are numbered based on whether they cross Europe on a North-South or an East-West axis. Currently there are ten North-South routes (odd numbers 1-19) and six East – West routes (including two circuits) (even numbers 2-12).

Is it possible to add additional routes?

Yes, we accept applications to create new EuroVelo routes, or modify existing itineraries in a three-year cycle. The next deadline for new route applications will be the 31st December 2019. A detailed explanation of the route application process can be found here:

<http://www.eurovelo.org/routes/newroutes/>

Can EuroVelo sponsor my cycling trip or charity fundraising ride?

The ECF is a not-for-profit organisation and cannot make financial contributions to rides using the EuroVelo network. However we love to hear news of inspiring journeys and can use our social media networks to spread these stories throughout the cycling community.

Where can I read accounts of people who have cycled the routes?

There is an endless selection of blogs available online by cyclists who have taken on the EuroVelo routes. A good idea is to check out [#EuroVelo](#) on twitter and Facebook to hear what bloggers are saying about their rides. We also feature these cyclists in regular articles for eurovelo.com.

About ECF

Contact Person: Ed Lancaster, Policy Officer, eurovelo@ecf.com

The European Cyclists' Federation (ECF) represents the interests of bicycle users, is based in Brussels and has over 70 member organizations across 40 countries.

As well as advocating for better cycling policies and promoting cycling at the international level in general, ECF has a range of programs including EuroVelo, the European cycle route network, the global networks "Scientists for cycling" and "Cities for Cyclists", the Velo-city and Velo-city Global conference series.

Footnotes

ⁱ European Parliament, Directorate-General for Internal Policies: 'The European Cycle Route Network EuroVelo' 2012, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/tran/studiesdownload.html?languageDocument=EN&file=78331>

ⁱⁱ Eurobarometer Special 406: 'Attitudes of Europeans toward Urban Mobility' 2013, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_406_en.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ European Cyclists' Federation: 'Signing of EuroVelo cycle routes' 2010, http://www.eurovelo.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/EuroVelo_Signing1.pdf

^{iv} C.f. iii