

**Action plan for operationalisation of instruments and politics for the region  
on the field of cycling in the frame of the project ECO-CICLE (European  
network for the promotion of cycle tourism in natural area)**



**Nova Gorica, November 2020**

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## 1. SUMMARY

The purpose of ECO-CICLE is going to deliver Action plans addressing regional policy instruments. Action plan means to set-up projects oriented to foster cycle tourism and natural heritage and to determine the conditions for their implementation. Through Growth and Jobs result indicators, ECO-CICLE Action plans aim to increase the amount of Structural Funds and other funds, investments compromised at regional level for cycle tourism sustainable development. The use of structural funds is considered mandatory for most of the intervention targeted by the Action plan. It induces a leverage effect to address other funding, especially private ones.

Action plan's objective is to identify the current situation regarding cycling infrastructure in the region of North Primorska (6 municipalities - Goriška subregion), to analyse current plans and to propose the actions and further direction of cycling infrastructure development.

Action plan document is divided in several parts. First part is dedicated to the Cycling - definitions, types approaches, use. Second part consist from demographic analyses of the region. Third part is identification of strategic documents, infrastructure, projects and instruments. Fourth part consist of strategy, goals, objectives and tasks and fifth and final part is detail action plan.

The area of action plans has 58055 inhabitants in municipalities of Nova Gorica (31335 inhabitants) and Five smaller municipalities neighbour Nova Gorica: Brda, Miren – Kostanjevica, Renče – Vogrsko, Šempeter – Vrtojba. Collectively, the five municipalities are home to 26 720 people.

For the action plan preparation different sources were used, public bases, different cycling project materials, sustainable urban plans and other documents.

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**General Information Project:** ECO-CICLE

**Partner organisation:**

RRA SEVERNE PRIMORSKE REGIJSKA RAZVOJNA AGENCIJA D.O.O. NOVA GORICA

**Other partner organisations involved:**

Municipality Nova Gorica, Municipality Šempeter-Vrtojba, Municipality Miren-Kostanjevica.  
Municipality Renče-Vogrsko, Municipality of Brda.

**Country:**

The actions take place in Slovenia

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**Part II – Policy Context:**

**EGTC GO and cross-border Integrated Territorial Investments**

The Action Plan aims to impact:

- Investment for Growth and Jobs programme
- European Territorial Cooperation programme
- Other regional development policy instrument

Name of the policy instrument addressed:

**Operational Programme for the Implementation of the EU Cohesion Policy 2014-2020,  
Republic of Slovenia**

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## 2. ABOUT ECO-CICLE

Cycle tourism targeting natural heritage environment raises increasing attractiveness for regional operational programme managing structural funds. This lack of clear definition in these policy instruments is the main barrier to go ahead with investments. The ECO-CICLE project is built on a partnership, based on several criteria such as the interest and capacity to influence policy instrument managing structural funds and the extension of protected areas in the territory.

Most of the territories covered by ECO-CICLE have extended protected areas. These areas are all characterized by limited growth schemes compared to adjacent areas and should then benefit from a distinctive treatment when planning intervention. These protected natural areas are legitimate when requesting additional attention to fully participate to the EU growth and jobs 2020 objectives and to compensate the current trends on depopulation and ageing regarding demographic issues. Sustainable tourism is now considered as a valuable support to boost the local economy and to generate employment and services aiming to valorise the cultural and natural heritages. Tourism usually consumes local services and local services based on cultural and natural heritages added values can attract tourism. For instance, DPH would like to attract the sea mass tourism to inland sustainable tourism. However, protected areas are extremely sensitive to economic development since few activities are authorized. Preservation is the master concept for our project and any cycle tourism development at natural heritage will be subordinated to the respect of biodiversity. This restrictive interpretation is fully assumed by ECO-CICLE since one of the specific objectives is to declare the bicycle as the official vehicle of any natural areas in Europe. Natural heritage interpretation can also benefit from the openness of cycling routes through IT tools on mobile devices.

ECO-CICLE aims to improve the regional policy instruments to better access structural funds investments. Indeed, it is not so clear how to proceed when looking for the right priority investment. Categories addressed through the OP can be tourism, natural heritage or sustainable transport and even land-use for local development planning when talking about trails. This lack of “natural setting” at OP is the main impediment to the development of initiatives requiring significant investment for infrastructures. By providing recommendations for amending OP, ECO-CICLE contributes to the dialogue between local administration in charge of natural heritage management and authorities managing OP. Most of the initiatives on cycle tourism or natural heritage valorisation are driven by local administration and relayed by local SMEs while their capacity to address improvement or modification to the OP management authorities is uncertain. ECO-CICLE will improve this issue for sustainable cycle tourism. ECO-CICLE can also be very practical to add expertise to investments project. Interregional cooperation is the straight way to access expertise from other regions in Europe which make great difference compared to stand alone development process. Innovation is by nature shared and when common needs are identified and addressed, investments turn into sustainable projects. This is the case for Andalusia being an important amount of ERDF funds (30 M Euros) devoted to promote the development of cycling routes through the Integrated Territorial Initiative (ITI). ECO-CICLE will provide new strategy, insights, criteria and practices in order to draft action plan for optimizing the impact and performance of the investments.

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### **General and specific objectives gather by ECO-CICLE:**

Networking, learning, policy relevance, investment for growth and capacity building are all concepts managed by the project.

#### **The General objective of ECO-CICLE is:**

Improving Structural Funds programme and regional development policies to promote investments targeting cycle-tourism at natural heritage.

#### **ECO-CICLE has 2 operational objectives:**

- strengthening regional policies through learning and capitalization of practices during Phase 1 and
- integrating and deploying main outcomes within mainstream regional policies instruments at Phase 2

Specific objectives are:

- Interregional learning: Exchange experiences, good practices, ideas and know-how linked to the promotion of cycle-tourism.
- Public authority capacity building: Improve local & regional public authority capacity to promote investment on sustainable mobility in natural areas.
- Natural heritage sustainable mobility model: Extend the success of urban sustainable mobility model to natural heritage environment by fostering bicycle as the official sustainable transport vehicle to access natural heritage and cycle-tourism the best option to promote the sustainable development at natural heritage.
- Stakeholders for green and competitive economy: Gather regional expertise as task force to explore the opportunities for the environmental protection and sustainable use of resources towards a green and competitive economy.
- Networking: Create a European network of local and regional public authorities for the promotion of cycle-tourism in natural heritage. Setting up the European network is based of partners own funding.

### **How did the lessons learned in ECO-CICLE inspired the actions:**

In the ECO-CICLE project several practices and experiences were identified, which helped in the process of preparation of action plan but also in the process of other activities in the project. The lessons contributed in all phases of plan preparation. The most useful for implementation in our region are following.

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- Construction of network cycling paths as ring around main point (city) - as learnt from Leipzig, improve communication lines not only in the way - prefer to main city, but can lead the cyclist around in the circle principle and thus (especially for tourist purposes) focus more on circular interconnection. Therefore, we use this approach when we provide plan for development of cycling infrastructure in the region (action 2)
  - Development of additional offer as “bett - bike “network in Germany and “Lebonpicnic” in French is very interesting. It is especially useful in our region where gastronomy is one of the main tourist products. The lesson will be implemented in the action plan as mark on the map where the location for cyclist friendly accommodation is and where pick up food places are located. We introduced the initiative already to shareholders and we are trying to connect the local providers.
  - The development of alternative routes - to make cyclist easier approach to the destination
  - Use of natural and sustainable materials (as much as possible) in construction of cycling paths
  - Building of bike paths with very limit impact on the environment
  - Use of different tools and creative approaches when promoting cycling between the inhabitants of the region and also between the tourists. (Madrid).

### 3. Problem definition

The use of motor vehicles leaves fatal spatial and ecological consequences. We know that the number of users of passenger cars has increased dramatically in recent years, and the use of cars is no longer just for longer distances, but for distances that are many times shorter than 1 kilometer. Consequently, pollution is increasing, and traffic congestion is increasing, which in turn leads to a loss of passenger time.

This is why investments in the development of public and cycling traffic and associated infrastructure are increasing, which will further improve pedestrian and cyclist safety in traffic. From an economic point of view, the bicycle is one of the most accessible modes of transport and is accessible to a relatively wide mass of people, while being useful for a very wide age group of people. Due to its small size it makes it accessible to places that are not possible with cars. The greatest advantage, however, is the ecological aspect of cycling, as this means of transport is the only one that does not emit emissions into the atmosphere. Even the bike itself consumes much less energy and raw materials than the car itself, for example. However, we do not need fuel for this, which adds a great plus to the economic and ecological aspect, because this form of transport requires only some energy and willpower. Recreation thus affects people's well-being and their health and satisfaction. Increased use of bicycles and bike rental systems consequently attract more attention from other road users, making driving safer for everyone. In urban areas, however, with the adoption of cyclists, innovations and improvements in the field of infrastructure appear, in terms of adding bicycle paths, banning cars around the city.

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## 4. Cycling

### 4.1 Cycling in general

Cycling, also called biking or bicycling, is the use of bicycles for transport, recreation, exercise or sport. Apart from two-wheeled bicycles, "cycling" also includes the riding of unicycles, tricycles, quadracycles, recumbent and similar human-powered vehicles. Cycling is widely regarded as a very effective and efficient mode of transportation optimal for short to moderate distances.

Bicycles provide numerous benefits in comparison with motor vehicles, including the sustained physical exercise involved in cycling, easier parking, increased manoeuvrability, and access to roads, bike paths and rural trails. Cycling also offers a reduced consumption of fossil fuels, less air or noise pollution, and much reduced traffic congestion. These lead to less financial cost to the user as well as to society at large (negligible damage to roads, less road area required). In addition, cycling provides a variety of health benefits. The World Health Organization (WHO) states that cycling can reduce the risk of cancers, heart disease, and diabetes that are prevalent in sedentary lifestyles. Cycling on stationary bikes has also been used as part of rehabilitation for lower limb injuries, particularly after hip surgery. Individuals who cycle regularly have also reported mental health improvements, including less perceived stress and better vitality.

Cycling also has its disadvantages. Among the disadvantages of cycling are the requirement of bicycles to be balanced by the rider in order to remain upright, the reduced protection in crashes in comparison to motor vehicles, often longer travel time (except in densely populated areas), vulnerability to weather conditions, difficulty in transporting passengers, and the fact that a basic level of fitness is required for cycling moderate to long distances.

### 4.2 Cycling tourism

**Definitions:** Bicycle tourism can encompass many things, but has been defined by the Path Less Pedalled as "any travel-related activity for the purpose of pleasure which incorporates a bicycle." Most types of bike tourism fall under these main categories (which often overlap), and can include road and mountain biking:

- Bicycle travel/touring: Independently organized, multi-day bicycle tours.
- Events: Organized rides, tours, and races.
- Destination riding: Rides centred around a destination or niche attraction.
- Day rides and urban cycling: Often spontaneous day tours of local/urban attractions.

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Bicycling is one of the fastest growing types of outdoor recreation and tourism. Bicycling also contributes to economy, to better community health and related savings, less congestion, environmental health, and happier people.

Bicycling as a form of tourism is one of the primary ways that communities can capitalize on sustainable economic development opportunities. Many studies have measured the economic benefits for communities, states, and specific trails and found significant impacts.

Bicycle travel is particularly beneficial for rural communities. Touring cyclists tend to seek out low-traffic, scenic rural roads that are off the beaten path. They are pedal-powered and travel more slowly, resulting in longer stays in a region as well as more spending for services.

A bicycle tourism destination is anywhere someone wants to ride a bike on their vacation. The possibilities for what a bicycle tourism destination could be are endless, given the many different types of bicycling and the variety of visitors' preferences. Destinations could include anything from a small, remote town to a huge urban downtown. The key to attracting bicycling visitors is ensuring that there is somewhere enjoyable for them to ride.

### Types of cycling interesting for tourism:

**Road cycling:** Road cycling is the most widespread form of cycling. Road racing is a highly publicized and viewed sport in almost every country in the world. The extraordinary efficiency of the bicycle makes it a very popular item for recreational fun, transport, or in racing. It is performed on roads and pathways, but mainly is restricted to concrete or pavement. You could go road cycling anywhere in the world.<sup>i</sup>

**Mountain biking:** Many people consider the mountain bike to be humanity's greatest adventure vehicle. They allow you to escape the confines of pavement, the roar of traffic, and the increasingly motorized din of modern civilization. While cyclists have been exploring unruly stretches of earth on bicycles for generations, mountain bikes — with their stout frames, bump-smoothing suspension, and wide, knobby tires — make it easier and more fun. Put simply, mountain bikes have forever changed and expanded the sport of bicycling by opening up a new world of terrain for velo exploration. National forests are usually the finest mountain bike touring playgrounds, but state parks, some national parks, or anyplace that has unpaved roads or trails can work<sup>ii</sup>

**Family cycling:** Family cycling holidays follow dedicated cycle paths or quiet roads with low traffic. Children's bikes are a must and tag-alongs, trailers and child seats are also available. The daily distances on family tours are not too taxing, with gentle terrain. Many of our tours are well-suited to family cycling, some are designed specifically for families while others are available to everyone but tick a lot of family cycling boxes.<sup>iii</sup>

**Cycling in bike parks:** Just a handful of years ago the choice of bike parks – gravity-focused riding centres with an uplift back to the top of the hill – was quite limited. Now more and more ski resorts are recognising the potential for summer revenues and, away from the big mountains, smaller bike parks with vehicle-and-trailer uplift are springing up all over the place. This has given rise to longer MTB seasons (ski resorts typically only open lifts for a short summer season), and more diverse terrain. Cycling in bike parks is far more thrilling and dangerous than road cycling. The bike parks are evolving very rapidly even where there are no ski lifts. The modern full suspension mountain bikes are enabling easy ride up hill and adventures or adrenaline ride down hills on down-hill paths.

**Travel cycling:** Travelling and the bicycle have been in a serious committed relationship for centuries, and it's not hard to understand why. Just about every environment, from desert to mountain to rolling prairie, is accessible with a trusty bike. Cycling through your destination brings you closer to the land and its people than just about any other style of travel. The mobility of a bike gives you the chance to see well-known locales from a new perspective and opens up their more remote corners to deeper exploration. And since you control the pace, you're free to stop at a friendly café or roadside market whenever you like, or turn that rolling field you just passed into an impromptu picnic spot.<sup>v</sup>

### Effects /outcomes of cycling tourism

Cycling tourism is on the rise, and with it a plethora of positive benefits. We hear a lot about the benefits of cycling in big cities. In small communities, however, the effects of bicycling tourism are less talked about, but they are making a big impact. Bicycle tourism is a booming sector. If you step away from the figures, the tangible benefits of cycling tourism is a healthier community, a boost to local business and an incentive to improve infrastructure, which benefits both residents and tourists. It can result in decreased congestion where bicycle tourism replaces some more traditional tourism, and in the longer term it can create job roles and improve marketing for local areas to perpetuate the benefits.

Unlike other tourists, bicycle tourists will use not only restaurants but also shops for supplies en route, and there's also the unmeasurable advantage of feel-good factor – there's a goodwill generated by the camaraderie of cycling that has a knock-on, positive effect on the communities it touches, and crucially for the individuals within them as well.

From long-distance cyclists to short-distance pleasure seekers, bicycle tourists are often affluent travellers mistaken for budget travellers, spending in the community without adding to pollution, keeping attractions alive and contributing to growth and prosperity. In short, what they take is minimal and what they give is extensive.<sup>vi</sup>

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## 5. Current situation

The geographical area that is included in action plan lies in the western part of Slovenia with the border to Italy and cover the area of middle and lower Vipava Valley and lower Soča Valley with Brda.

Transitional valleys such as the Vipava valley have through the history always represented the area of migrations, many different armies travelled through the valley, trade routes were established and thus the possibility of settlement of the territory was given. It is no different in case of Vipava and Soča Valley. This passage was used in the migration of people from the east and south-east to the west, and of course vice versa. Vipava Valley specialty is a wide opening to the west, while the east is limited by the Trnovski gozd and Nanos towards Razdrto and Hrušica. Vipava Valley does not only represent the plains adjacent to the river Vipava, but it is a broad band between Trnovski gozd, Čaven, Nanos and Vipava hills that separate the valley from the Karst. The Mediterranean climate, which penetrates to the valley from the west, allows the development of agriculture. Bora wind, north-easterly wind, which from the mountain peaks comes down to the valley with high speed has not only influenced the design of dwellings, but also turned the course of the world history. The Soča Valley, the valley along the emerald River Soča, flows from north-west part of Slovenia to the Gorica area, where the valley is spread out to a large plain. The region has 58055<sup>1</sup> inhabitants (2019).

The region is developing rapidly in the field of tourism especially by offering natural heritage and local product. The destination is very suitable to be visit by bike, or to use bike to explore the destination. Therefore, numerus bike trails and paths were developed as well as bike parks. From the investment point of some bike trails were also build.

### 5.1 Tourism in Goriška - number of guests, overnights

Tourism in Goriška region is in the rise. If years ago, Goriška was known from Casions tourism, today the situation is quite different. The focus is changing to the different experiences connected with cultural and natural heritage, local products, gastronomy and wine, different outdoor activities, especially cycling, walking and horse riding. The number of guests is rising and demand for the local tourist product is rising too. The cycling paths as one of the core activities in the region are developing. The municipality of Nova Gorica is implementing bike sharing system, the other municipalities in the region are planning to connect to this system, as well.

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<sup>1</sup> SURS - Statistical office - republic of Slovenia

With good cycling network which connect points of interest in the region, bike sharing system, bike tracks and parks, will the interest to visit region became even stronger. The local inhabitants will also use more established cycling infrastructure in therefore became an important segment of sustainable mobility.

## 5.2 Sustainable urban mobility plans

In autumn 2012 the municipality of Nova Gorica started the development of a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) together with five surrounding Slovenian municipalities and the adjacent Italian municipality of Gorizia.

Although Slovenia has no prior experience of integrated transport planning, Nova Gorica - through applying SUMP guidelines developed with the support of the European Commission – successfully involved stakeholders and citizens to two years later produce an integrated cross-border SUMP for seven municipalities. The draft SUMP was accepted by the local political decision-making process. The SUMP is promoting co-ordination between local communities, different areas of policy making and decision-making levels. The document uses sustainable approach and thus balances social justice, environmental protection and economic development as well. An Integrated Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan lays its focus on ambitious goals, introducing measures that allow thorough monitoring of their effects and costs. Special emphasis is placed on involving the residents of local communities into strategy development.<sup>2</sup>

The strategy covered in SUMP consists of five strategic pillars:

1. Establishment of an integrated transport planning.
2. Promotion of walking as an important mode of travel.
3. Creation of conditions for optimal exploitation of cycling potentials.
4. Development of an attractive public transport.
5. Changing the car-user habits.

The road map to introduce the SUMP to practice was concentrated in four activities:

### **Promotion of e-mobility through the use of electrically powered vehicles in the Municipality of Brda.**

The Municipalities of the cross-border region of Nova Gorica are strongly encouraging environmentally friendly modes of travel through placement of filling stations for electrically powered bicycles, scooters and cars.

### **Ensuring the conditions for optimal development of cycling potentials in Gorizia.**

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<sup>2</sup> [file:///C:/Users/branko/Downloads/MONG\\_CPS\\_Brosura\\_ANG\\_TISK\\_FINAL.pdf](file:///C:/Users/branko/Downloads/MONG_CPS_Brosura_ANG_TISK_FINAL.pdf)

In order to promote cycling as an optimum mode of travel over short distances, the local communities are also developing an appropriate infrastructure, such as organised bicycle lines and self-service bicycle rental systems.

### **Introduction of a reduced speed traffic zone in the Municipality of Šempeter-Vrtojba.**

Different elements of the motor-vehicle speed restricting will reduce the volume of motor traffic in the rearranged zones, enhance safety and encourage walking, cycling and public transport flows.

### **Adjusting the city centre of Nova Gorica to the vulnerable groups of population.**

Proper planning and adjustments are essential measures that will ensure an accessible public space as well as enable the citizens the full enjoyment of the city life.

The Municipalities of Nova Gorica and Šempeter Vrtojba decided to prepare new, more detail SUMP, which were finished in 2017. The difference between two SUMP s (from 2012 and 2017) are obvious. The 2017 SUMP 's for both communities is more detail and are covering wider areas of sustainable mobility. The new SUMP is covering:

- integrated transport planning
- walking
- cycling
- attractive public transport
- motor road traffic optimization

Areas that are covered are analysed and consist of objectives, tasks, actions and financials. The actions that are covering cycling are elaborated in the action plan

## **5.3 Finished or active projects regarding cycling in the region**

### **5.3.1 Interbike**

The main purpose of the project is to develop a cycling network in the border region accompanied by an infrastructure and an intermodal network. The planned activities include: the development of a

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project for the main track cycling with links to local roads and intermodal networks that allow you to travel without disruption from Ravenna to Kranjska Gora, the preparation of a study with a proposal for a system unitary identification of the slopes, the construction of single missing sections of slopes, the preparation of a database and a digital infrastructure for the geographic system computer, the realization of a web site, the preparation of a cycling guide in four languages with a map and promote the project in public.

### 5.3.2 Croctal

The CroCTaL (Crossborder Cycling Tracks and Landscape) project aim was to improve cross-border road links and connect cities and rural areas with a desire to limit traffic and pollution.

The purpose was creation of a network of cycle paths in the cross-border area, which would be integrated into both urban and rural contexts, with the aim of increasing accessibility and ensuring sustainable territorial integration and promotion of policies for balanced and sustainable cross-border development by implementing network interventions aimed at creating common destinations related to cycling routes, joint promotion and marketing of cycling routes and sustainable mobility models.

### 5.3.3 Bike path from Solkan to Plave

Two-way bike path from Solkan to Plave was built and opened to the public in 2016. With several bike stops and length of more than 9 kilometres is one of the most beautiful bike paths in Slovenia. Bike path is widely used by cyclists. The bike path was built with cofinancing of EU regional development fund.

### 5.3.4 Isonzo-Soča Cross-border Park

The project envisages the construction, in the territories of Gorizia, Nova Gorica and Šempeter-Vrtojba, of a cross-border network of cycle and pedestrian paths along the Isonzo river and along the State border that connects Solkan to Šempeter-Vrtojba and then to Miren. Infrastructural works were/will be carried out to improve the usability of the area and make it more attractive to citizens and tourists.

The goals of the project are the conservation, protection, recovery and development of the natural and cultural heritage of the cross-border area along the Isonzo-Soča river, as a homogeneous tourist-recreational destination. A network of pedestrian and cycle paths and tourist-recreational infrastructures will be set up, as well as an integrated communication and promotion plan.

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By 2021 substantial infrastructure works will be carried out, which will improve the usability of the area and increase its attractiveness for citizens and tourists

## 1. Goals and objectives in the field of cycling in the region

Main objectives for cycling development in the region are:

### 1. To rise the share of cyclist in the region

The share of cyclist in the region depends on different attributes, which have to be fulfilled to enable the rise of cyclist share. These attributes are in general defined as objectives 2 and 3. Currently the use of cars is the main way of transport in the municipalities. Because of the geographical location and many dispersed settlements it is hard to expect drastic change in share of cyclist. But with positive measures and campaign the share can gradually improve

### 2. To enable infrastructure and established conditions which will allow inhabitants and visitors to use the bikes in the short relations in the region

The necessary infrastructure (safe cycling paths, bike sharing system, signs, parking slots,...) has huge influence in the cycle usage, therefore the arrangement of the infrastructure can boost the use of cycle and cycling in the area.

### 3. To rise the traffic security of the cyclists

The security of cyclist is another important condition - dealbreaker - for massive use of cycles. The security measures can be physical (construction works on the cycling paths), legislative (strict regulation) and preventive (different preventive actions, promotions, training and education activities, etc).

The municipalities involved in the Eco Cycle project from the Goriška subregion declared the cycling as one of the focus and priorities (based on SUMP s and municipalities development plans) and also based on the past projects. The priority will be obtained with several goals the most important are:

- Make all roads safer for cycling
  - It is necessary to work with on education of drivers, work on road infrastructure, cycling paths and promotion of cycling

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- Develop a cohesive bikeway network which includes building new bike paths besides state and local roads,
    - The bike network consists of international, national and local cycling paths which have to be developed in holistic method, what will enable to explore opportunities on each level.
  - Building cycling parks and cycling paths away from state and local roads
    - To promote cycling as recreation and tourism product besides cycling road network also other cycling areas have to be developed. Bike parks, bike routes, polygons, etc).
  - Maintain bikeways in a state of good repair
    - The maintenance is very important, and many times forgotten. Bad maintenance can lead to more dangerous paths and therefore to higher number of accidents and lower number of cyclists.
  - Marking cycling paths
    - The cycling paths have to be well market on the maps and on the path.
  - To rise the safety of cyclists
    - The rise of safety is very important to rise the number of cyclists in the region without rising the number of accidents and injuries
  - To promote the road and cycling safety
    - The cyclists and also the drivers have to be aware of each other, of risks and how to avoid the risks
  - Promote cycling as a mean of transport
    - This kind of promotion is needed especially for local inhabitants, to convince them of using bikes and cycling
  - Promote the different lifestyle
    - This goal is in line with promotion of cycling and is also focused on local inhabitants.
  - Promote cycling tourism
    - Promotion of cycling tourism is focused on possible visitors, tourists and is promoting cycling products and infrastructure in the region – in connection with other cycling products.

Fulfilment of this goals will result in the main objective which is:

- To rise the share of cyclist in the region

## 2. STANDARADS AND NORMATIVES REGARDING CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

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There are several documents that declare standards, normatives and recommendations regarding building and implementing cycling infrastructure. DRSI – (Direkcija RS za Infrastrukturo) issued already in 2005 a publication “zasnova kolesarskega omrežja v RS” (Design of the cycling infrastructure in RS)<sup>3</sup> where several types of cycling paths were defined. The direction split cycling paths into:

- Long distance cycling paths
- Main cycling paths,
- Regional cycling paths
- Local cycling paths

It can be built as separate cycling path or cycling lane on the roadway.

The Ministry for infrastructure issued in 2017 also document - directive for placing cycling infrastructure in urban areas<sup>4</sup>, where detail guidelines of how to prepare and place the bike paths, what to consider, which attributes are important, etc. are written.

The project Adriabike developed the user guide Manual about cycling. Where standards about cycling, cycling infrastructure and marking the cycling infrastructure are detailed.<sup>5</sup>

Directives and recommendations of how to develop a cycling (tourist) destination was prepared by Association of municipalities and towns of Slovenia<sup>6</sup>.

### 3. SWOT

The Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) methodology is a common analysis technique for decision making processes or planning, by looking at the internal and external environment of an organization. The internal factors that are considered, while creating a SWOT analysis, are the organization’s strengths and weaknesses. The external factors can’t be influenced by the organization and influence the possibilities and restrictions of it. Namely they are its opportunities and threats factors. Swot analyses about cycling and especially cycling infrastructure in the region is approximation of the whole region and is trying to combine strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the whole region, But the situation vary from municipality to municipality.

<sup>3</sup> [https://predlagam.vladi.si/fileadmin/dokumenti/predlogi/156/156\\_182.pdf](https://predlagam.vladi.si/fileadmin/dokumenti/predlogi/156/156_182.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/transport/sites/transport/files/cycling-guidance/priloga\\_3\\_kolesarjem\\_prijazna\\_infrastruktura.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/transport/sites/transport/files/cycling-guidance/priloga_3_kolesarjem_prijazna_infrastruktura.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.adriabike.eu/flipping/Manuale%20della%20Ciclabilita%20sloveno.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://skupnostobcin.si/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/5.pdf>

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## 3.1 Strengths

The strengths regarding cycling in the area:

- Geographical location- possibilities of using bikes whole year (mainly flat topography, Mediterranean climate - possibility of using bikes whole year.
- Attractive location for using bike.
- Many projects are already finished in the field of developing and building cycling infrastructure.
- Cooperation and Common activities taken together from different municipalities.
- The strong demand for cycling.
- Developing tourist products.
- Low rate of criminality and vandalism (stolen bikes, broken bike sharing points,).

## 3.2 Weakness'

The weaknesses identified:

- The financial sources to develop cycling infrastructure are not high enough regarding needs.
- Car affine population.
- Cycling paths are implemented only on the limited number of roads.
- Relatively low density of population - higher cost for implementation of different biking systems.
- Insufficient regional planning and coordination.

## 3.3 Opportunities

Opportunities that can be explored:

- Combination of regional needs with pan European and state cycling network and thus exploring the opportunities that this initiative brings to the region.
- Possible connections of cycling infrastructure with crossborder regions.
- Exploration of already existing EU projects (EZTS) between Nova Gorica and Gorizia.
- Implementation of cycling paths will boost tourism.
- Support to the healthy lifestyle.

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## 3.4 Threats

Threats that have to be avoided:

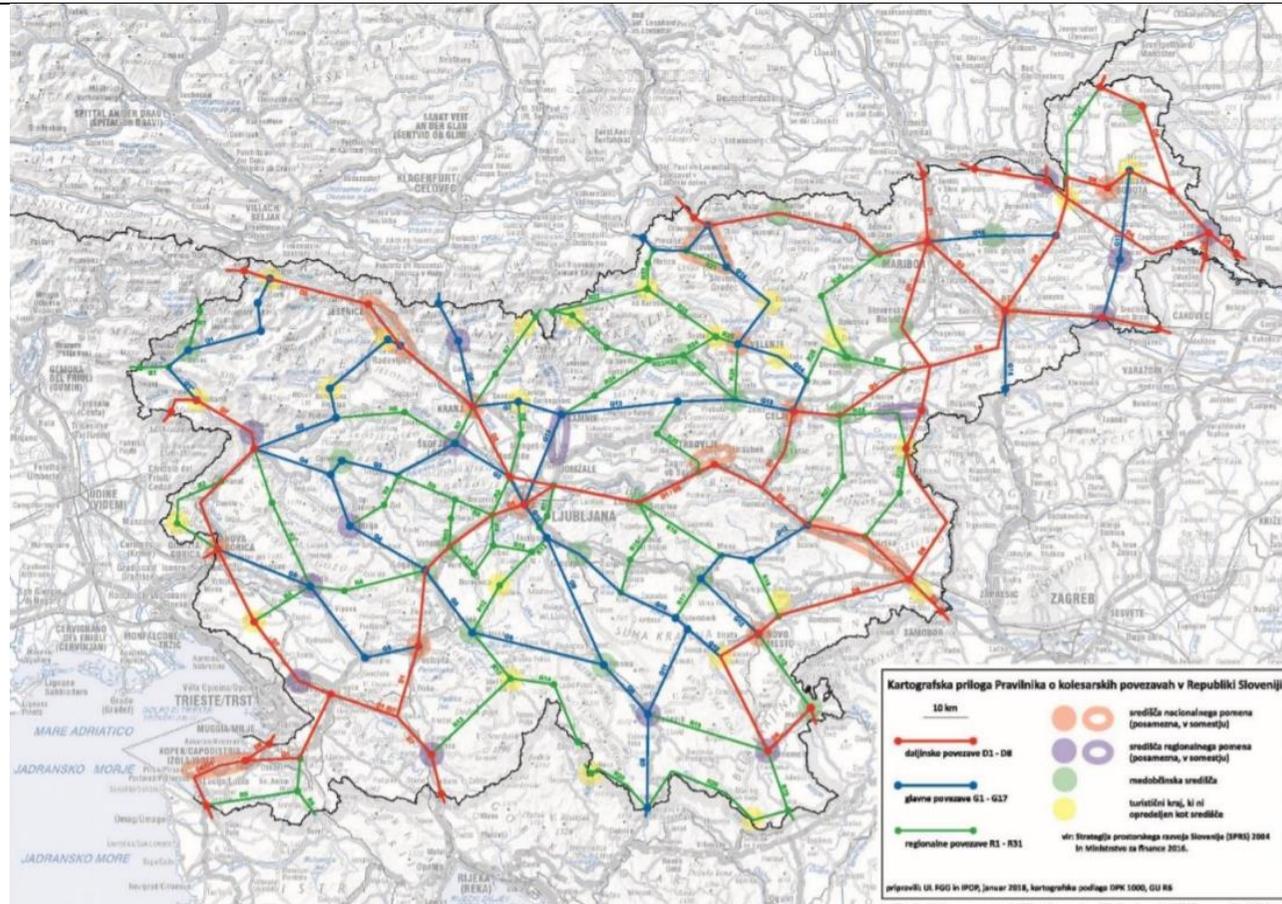
- Possible implementation of different concepts of cycling in different municipalities.
- For the cycling paths besides state roads, is necessary to involve state institution in the process, which are not flexible. That will result in longer time frames for cycling paths implementation.

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## 4. State cycling infrastructure<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> <https://beta.finance.si/files/2019-04-01/2019-03-Biznis-in-trendi-v-gradbenistvu-marec-koncna-ppts-5ca23f5ad98e1.pdf>



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## Part III – Details of the actions envisaged

### 5. Activities

There are four main tasks which are elaborated in actions. Maintenance of the current cycling paths, building and implementing new cycling paths. The building of paths consist of several actions, which are different in time frame location and costs. Some of them are just upgrades of current roads, the other need to be prepared from the scratch. The proposed actions are started from the international cycling paths (euro velo ) to the local paths, parks and other infrastructure. Implementing different cycling system is another type of actions and promotion / education.

#### 5.1 Action 1: Regular maintenance of cycling paths

The municipalities will regularly maintain cycle lanes, lanes and paths (rehabilitation, cleaning, etc.), especially on surfaces which do not allow safe and comfortable cycling. Interventions such as curbs, impact pits, rolling surfaces, etc. will be carried out. The maintenance is regular activity and is not suitable to be financed through different types of development funds.

##### 5.1.1 Activities

Maintenance of cycling paths is yearly action and consist of:

- Maintenance of the surfaces of the paths.
- Maintenance of the signs and marks.
- Maintenance of the bike stops and pike parking slots.
- Maintenance of green areas around bike paths.
- Maintenance of and installation of urban equipment.

##### 5.1.2 Shareholders

This is task of municipalities therefore the municipality is the main shareholder of the activity.

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### 5.1.3 Finance and financial sources

The regular maintenance activities are planned within each municipality with yearly plans and budgets. The yearly sum for maintenance for all municipalities is up to 150.000 EUR for all municipalities.

The sources for maintenance are regular municipality sources.

## 5.2 Action 2: Upgrade of existing bike paths and building of the new ones in the Šempeter Vrtojba Municipality

- Defining the locations of the upgrades and new paths.
- Preparing the technical and project documentation.
- Acquiring building permissions.
- Construction works.

### 5.2.1 Shareholders

Municipality Šempeter Vrtojba

### 5.2.2 Finance and financial sources

The planned sum for this action in 4 (2020 – 2024) years is 1.335.000 EUR. The sum is combination of municipality and EU sources.

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## 5.3 Action 3: Upgrade of existing pike paths and building of the new ones in the Nova Gorica municipality

- Review of defined locations, definition of priorities and search of additional locations. Key locations are main streets inside the city.
- Preparing the technical and project documentation.
- Acquiring building permissions.
- Construction works.
- Changes in traffic regulation (implementation of one way streets, speed limits, redefinition of parking cones,...).

### 5.3.1 Shareholders

Municipality Nova Gorica.

### 5.3.2 Finance and financial sources

The planned sum for this action in is 200.000 EUR. The sum is from the municipality sources. With additional financing from EU the building of the paths can be faster.

## 5.4 Action 4: Construction and upgrade the cycling paths under the trans European cycling network - EuroVelo

- Confirmation of the suggested path.
- Preparing the technical and project documentation.
- Acquiring building permits.
- Construction works.

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## 5.4.1 Shareholders

Municipality Nova Gorica

## 5.4.2 Finance and financial sources

The planned sum for this action is 3.000.000 EUR. The sum is from the municipality sources. With additional financing from EU the building of the path can start in the near future.



Figure: Map of EuroVelo path in the Goriška Subregion

## 5.5 Action 5: Construction and upgrade of the cycling paths between settlements of the participating municipalities

The construction and upgrade of the cycling paths between settlements is one of the most important tasks if the municipalities want to push the use of bikes from the side of local communities as a part of sustainable mobility system. It is also very important to boost the use of bikes from the part of tourist and visitors. The separate lanes and separate paths from moto transport, is essential for the use of bikes.

The proposal paths are only proposals without some professional background. The studies where exact location will be and how the proposed paths will be placed in the space, have to be done.

The principle which will be taken into account when developing path will be:

- circular approach - to connect the region circularly and with the main city,
- to develop innovative approaches to present obstacles (Path to Goriška brda is going through Italian territory because approach is much easier for cyclists).
- The development of alternative routes - to make cyclist easier approach to the destination.
- Use of natural and sustainable materials (as much as possible) in construction of cycling paths. Building of bike paths with very limit impact on the environment

The priority axis logically upgrades the existing cycling paths in the holistic network for the entire region.

- Defining the priority axis:
  - Nova Gorica – Prvačina - Dornberk - Branik
    - This axis has two phases' priorities where the first phase / priority is including some investment to build new section and use the local and filed roads fully connect the settlements. The second phase includes investments to build bike phase close to current state roads.
      - First phase – Šempeter - Bazara
      - First phase - Volčja draga - Vogrsko - Dombrava - Prvačina (current local roads)
      - First phase - Prvačina - Dorberk - Zalošče – Saksid - Branik (current local and filed roads)
      - Second phase - Volčja draga – Prvačina - Dorberk - Branik – close the current state road

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- Rožno Dolina - Ajševica,
    - The bike path is starting In Rožna dolina (connection to the current bike path - Nova Gorica - Šempeter) and is going close to the state road to Ajševica. In Ajševica the path goes in two direction - one on the way to Šempas and the other passing OMW Gas station on the old road to Kromberk and to the Hrast Inn.
  - Šempas - Tri Hiše - Ajševica,
    - The Bike path is connected to the Bike path in Ajševica (Rožna dolina, Ajševica, Kromberg), it is close to the state road to the Šempas - it is also part of Eurovelo.
  - Miren – Vrtojba – Šempeter
    - Bike parth is almost finished. Only part passing Hofer have to be done
  - Miren – Renče
    - First phase: The path on the existing local road through Vrtoče has to be made
    - Second Phase - The Miren - Volčja Draga path through Bilje and Bukovica has to be build. It Will connect Miren - Vrtojba - Šempeter path with Nova Gorica - Šempeter – Prvačina.
  - Miren – Kostanjevica
    - The path on the existing state road from Miren to Kostanjevica has to be marked.
  - Renče - Volčja Draga – Šempeter
    - From Renče to Bukovica - on the current field road (Renče Bridge to Bukovica Hall).
    - Bukovica - Volčja Draga - close to the state road – it is connected to the path from Miren - Bilje - Voljčja draga).
  - Vogrsko – Volčja Draga
    - The path on the existing state road.
  - Vogrsko – Šempas
    - First phase - From Vogrsko - Motorway viaduct to Šempas (Leban Inn). (current field road)
    - Secon phase - From Vogrsko to “Tri Hiše” – Close to the current state road.
  - Solkan – Brda (Dobrovo)
    - The path will go from the new cycling bridge in Solkan - through Peumica Valley (Italian territory) till Pod Sabotin and Hum. From Hum to Dobrovo the path will be close to the current state road.
  - Preparing the technical and project documentation
    - Technical and project documentation will be prepared for the bike paths
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- Spatial documents
  - Construction documentation
  - The documents have to take into consideration already prepared plans for the bike network in the region.
- Acquiring building permissions
    - Based on prepared documents the building permissions have to be acquired
  - Construction works
  - Development of network of cycling friendly accomodations and pick up places for food

With the defined axis the cycling network of Nova Gorica subregion will enable the safe use of cycle between almost all major settlements. In combination with implemented and upgraded bike sharing system, this will boost the cycling in the subregion.

The plan of new relations/axis has to be harmonised with bike sharing system.

### 5.5.1 Shareholders

Municipality Nova Gorica

### 5.5.2 Finance and financial sources

The planned sum for this action in is 35.000.000 EUR. The financial sources for this path are not yet defined. But in general, it will be the combination of own and EU sources.

### 5.5.3 Conclusion

The planned upgrades are only plan for next 5 – 8 years. After that new proposals and needs will be identified and put into construction. If there will be available soe additional fund then the construction can be faster, and new paths can be sooner included in the plan.

## 5.6. Action 6: Implementation of bike sharing system in the subregion

Municipalities of Nova Gorica and Šempeter Vrtojba are in the middle of activities to implement bike sharing system. Once the bike sharing system will be implemented in those two municipalities the basis for expansion in mentioned municipalities (new stations and more bikes) and in surrounding municipalities will be done. The municipalities will use same system and therefore improve the cycling movements between settlements in the sub region.

The necessary activities for implementation and upgrade of the bike sharing system

- Sign of a participation agreement/memorandum between the municipalities of subregion.
- Definition of locations for bike sharing system.
- Definition / improvement of the bike sharing system (type).
- Implementation of the system.
- Maintenance and management of the system.
- Implementation of the system additional phases.
- Information and promotion activities.

The bike sharing system in the Nova Gorica and Šempeter Vrtojba – can be focused on classical bikes. But when the network will be widened to the other subregion municipalities the use of electric bikes will be more useful, because of the distances between settlements.

### 5.6.1. Shareholders

Shareholders of the project are:

- Municipality Nova Gorica.
- Municipality Šempeter Vrtojba.
- Regional Development Agency.
- Municipality of Gorizia.
- Municipality Miren Kostanjevica.
- Municipality Renče Vogrsko.
- Municipality of Brda.

### 5.6.2. Finance and financial sources

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The planned sum for this action is 250.000 EUR for the first phase. For additional phases (more bike stations, inclusion of other municipalities) is estimated value ca. 300.000 EUR. Maintenance and management of the system is about 30.000 - 50000 EUR /yearly. The financial sources for this path are not yet defined. But in general, it will be the combination of own and EU sources.

## **5.7. Action 7: Promotion and information activities**

- Promotion of cycling different cycling activities and events
- Preparation and distribution of marketing materials
- Workshops and trainings (especially in schools)

### **5.7.1. Shareholders**

Regional development agency, Municipalities. Schools

### **5.7.2. Finance and financial sources**

The planned sum for this action is 15.000 EUR yearly.

## **5.8. Action 8: Implementation of monitoring and numbering the number and share of cyclist in the region**

- Definition of the appropriate methodology.
- Preparation of technical and information support.
- Regular measuring.

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## 5.8.1. Shareholders

Regional development agency, All involved municipalities

## 5.8.2. Finance and financial sources

The planned sum for this action is 50.000 EUR for the establishment of the system and 20.000 EUR yearly for measurements and reports.

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.cyclingweekly.com/news/latest-news/cycling-holiday-365786>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.adventurecycling.org/blog/how-to-mountain-bike-tour/>

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iii <https://www.freedomtreks.co.uk/family-cycling-holidays>

iv <https://www.redbull.com/car-en/top-bike-parks-in-the-world>

v <https://www.gadventures.com/travel-styles/active/cycling/>

vi <https://www.welovecycling.com/wide/2017/11/23/bicycle-tourism-slowly-changing-small-communities-world/>

**Date:** 30th April 2021

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Stamp of the organisation (if available):** \_\_\_\_\_