

Annual National EuroVelo Coordination Centres and Coordinators Meeting

European Cyclists' Federation

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Meeting Notes

Date: Saturday 15nd October 2016

Time: 09:00 – 13:30

Location: Gebietsbetreuung 2/20, Vienna, Austria

Attendees: Adam Bodor, ECF (Belgium)
Aleksandar Stanojlovic, Yugo Cycling Campaign (Serbia)
Bojan Žižek, Slovenian Cyclists' Network (Slovenia)
Camille Thome, DRC (EVC) (France)
Christian Weinberger, ecoplus (Austria)
Daniel Mourek, Nadace Partnerstvi (EVC) (Czech Republic)
Doug Corrie, Sport Ireland Trails (Ireland)
Ed Lancaster, ECF (Belgium)
Eric Nijland, Fietsplatform (The Netherlands)
Evelyn Eder, Radlobby (Austria)
Feridun Ekmekci, ENVERCEVKO - Mugla (Turkey)
Ginny Sullivan, Adventure Cycling Association (USA)
Giulia Cortesi, FIAB (Italy)
Henk Vriend, Europafietsers (The Netherlands)
Jesper Pørkson, DCT (Denmark)
Jesus Freire, ECF (Belgium)
Kaethi Diethelm, Pro Velo (EVC) (Switzerland)
Károly Buzás, Cycling Hungary Alliance (Hungary)
Kristóf Szabó, Cycling Hungary Alliance (Hungary)
Lukas Stadtherr, SwitzerlandMobility Foundation (EVC) (Switzerland)
Manfred Neun, ECF (Belgium)
Marit Espeland, Norwegian Public Roads Administration (Norway)
Monique Goldschmit, LVI (Luxembourg)
Özlem Taşkın-Erten, İzmir City Council (Turkey)

Paul Zandveld, Europafietsers (The Netherlands)
Philippe Herkrath, LVI (Luxembourg)
RadPavel Harbunou, Minsk Cycling Community (Belarus)
Radu Mititean, Romanian Cyclists' Federation (Romania)
Spiros Papageorgiou, Cities for Cycling (Greece)
Vladan Krečković, Danube Competence Centre (Serbia)
Zoran Klarić, Croatian Institut of Tourism Zagreb (Croatia)

Introduction

Opening speech by Kaethi Diethelm (KD) who welcomed the participants to this year's Annual NECC/Cs Meeting.

Adam Bodor (AB) provided an overview of the main developments related to the EuroVelo network over the past 12 months and looks forward to the key events over the coming year ([see presentation](#)).

Who is who.

Updates from NECC/Cs

Host NEC

Evelyn Eder (EE) and Christian Weinberger (CW) presented Radlobby Österreich, the Austrian National EuroVelo Coordinator and host of the meeting ([see presentation](#)).

Newest NECC/C

Jesper Pørkson introduced the newest National EuroVelo Coordination Centre (NECC) in the network: Dansk Cykelturisme/Danish Cycle Tourism (DCT) ([see presentation](#)).

Europafietsers

Paul Zandveld (PZ) from the organisation Europafietsers presented their work ([see presentation](#)) and indicated that they were willing to work with the NECC/Cs to help improve the EuroVelo network.

This was followed by a discussion regarding feedback from users. The participants were split into two groups and asked to consider how their organisations would deal with the following comments received by the EuroVelo Management Team in recent months:

Group A

1. "The GPX track I've downloaded are completely useless and dangerous - it takes people to routes not allowed to cycle."
2. "After 1km the asphalt turns into gravel/sand, which is cyclable but after another 500m it becomes loose sand and big puddles. The combination of those makes conditions very dirty and even with walking and pushing it is hard to continue."

Group B

3. "I travel by bicycle on the famous EuroVelo X. On Thursday my dog was shot by a hunter on the EuroVelo route."
4. "It is a mess, with a lot of missing pieces. Sometimes good signs, sometimes completely absent. Impossible to follow without GPS. Some communities have done their job, many have done nothing."

Comments and feedback:

- It was generally agreed that feedback is useful and many NECC/Cs encourage users to submit them (e.g. evaluation forms or apps) because it can help to improve the network.
- Opinions differed on how to handle the data. In some cases it is transmitted directly to the relevant authority (e.g. Highways Authority), whereas in other countries the NECC/Cs prefer to filter the non-relevant comments out first.
- Everyone agreed that most important thing is to manage users' expectations about what to expect on the route. If the information available does not match the reality then it can lead to disappointment or even dangerous situations.
- CW proposed installing a TripAdvisor-style ratings system for users related to EuroVelo routes/sections.

Proposal for a European Cyclists' Friendly Service Scheme

Giulia Cortesi (GC) presented FIAB's proposal to connect on the European level the various national cyclists' friendly services schemes that have been established ([see presentation](#)).

Comments and feedback:

- General support amongst those present for the first step: coordination of information under an umbrella website linking to, and linked by, the national networks (following the subsidiarity principle).
- Joining this platform would be open to all (fee paying) NECC/Cs but would not be obligatory.
- There was some discussion about where this portal could be hosted but AB argued that the natural fit would be EuroVelo.com, as it is a gateway to cycling in Europe, which was supported.
- The participants agreed that at this stage it's too early to discuss about further steps of integration proposed under Stage 2.

Coffee break

Services for NECC/Cs

Overview

Ed Lancaster (EL) presented an overview of the services that are available for NECC/C. This was followed by more detailed presentations.

European Certification Scheme

EL reminded the participants of the European Certification Scheme ([see presentation](#)) and in particular the potential for it to be used for general route development activities. The tool, including the app, is available for NECC/Cs to assess their network (even non-EuroVelo routes) and further training courses will be held during 2017.

Comments and Feedback:

- Doug Corrie (DC) gave a practical example of how they are using the tool for the evaluation of the route of EuroVelo 1 in Ireland. They are not using the certification assessment app for this as it would be too much detail at this stage, however they are using key criteria from the certification standard to assess the route in a more simplified way and have developed a reporting format. It is targeted primarily at management in the local authority to communicate to them the findings and status of the route so that they may implement the route or take other actions as recommended
- GC also thought that the ECS was a very useful tool for NECC/Cs and should be listed as one of the key benefits for being part of the network.
- JP asked about the overlaps with the ADFC's certification system. Would routes have to be certified twice? EL and AB answered by saying that the ECS was based on the ADFC system but adapted to the European context. One of the main differences was the emphasis given to the supporting services under the ECS, in comparison with the focus on the route infrastructure components under the ADFC system. Furthermore, under the ECS the scoring is linked to the type of users that the route would be suitable for rather than a general score (number of stars). At the moment because there are differences in the systems, there is no agreed approach to combining them (to avoid routes having to be certified twice) but this is something that the ECF will look into further.

New EuroVelo Overview Map and Underperforming Routes

Jesus Freire (JF) gave an update on the latest progress with the new EuroVelo Overview Map and with the under-performing routes ([see presentation](#)). One of the main changes being introduced this time was the titles and the descriptions of the route development categories. A first draft of the map was also available for the participants to comment on.

Comments and feedback:

- CW made a request for more detailed maps to be produced for each EuroVelo route.
- There was confusion amongst some of the participants about the differences between undeveloped and underperforming routes. JF explained that under-performing routes are those where the ECF has received no information for many years.
- It was proposed that the ECF contact the relevant tourist boards and issue an online statement as a next step for the underperforming routes. JF confirmed that this was planned.

Advertising policy

EL presented the ECF's proposed approach for adverts on the EuroVelo Overview Map and EuroVelo.com, as set out in a Media Pack ([see presentation](#)).

Comments and feedback:

- It was proposed that the (fee paying) NECC/Cs should be given the first opportunity to find advertisers for the map.
- Daniel Mourek suggested including advertisements on the map itself, particularly in Eastern Europe where there are less routes.
- CW was worried about cannibalising funds and therefore welcomed the opportunity to comment on the ECF's proposals.
- It was agreed to send the Media Pack to all the NECC/Cs following the meeting because the deadlines for the map are fast approaching.

Website and app developments

JF presented recent updates to the EuroVelo websites, including the development of the first transnational EuroVelo app in the frame of the ICTE project, supported by COSME (see [presentation](#)). Particular attention was given to the new bookable offers search engine that had been added to EuroVelo.com in recent weeks.

Comments and feedback:

- There was a discussion about whether the offers should be transnational only or transnationally relevant. It was eventually agreed that whilst the offers should be transnationally relevant all cycle tourism offers could feature on the search engine (where relevant for a fee) if approved by the relevant NECC/C(s).
- Similarly it was also agreed that the offers need not necessarily be linked to EuroVelo routes because EuroVelo.com covers cycling in Europe generally.
- Several participants were worried about the issue of cannibalisation again. If the European search engine was free then it would act as a disincentive for paying at a national level but some advertisers might not want to pay twice.
- It was agreed that the ECF should prepare a proposal based on the feedback received.

New routes

EL briefly explained the new route application process, as the new application period starts at the end of 2016 (see [presentation](#)).

Comments and feedback:

- Radu Mititean (RM) asked how developed the routes had to be to join the network with particular reference to the proposed Black Sea Cycle Route. KD answered that they should be signed with EV signs at least.

AOB

- Eric Nijland (EN) invited everyone to join next year's Annual NECC/Cs Meeting, which will be taking place in Arnhem-Nijmegen in the Netherlands on Monday 12th June, the day before the Velo-city conference. Fietsplatform have been working with the organisers to agree the venue and prepare the programme.

Closing and Summary

- ECF President Manfred Neun brought the meeting to a close with an inspiring speech on the need to build on the impressive foundations that have been built for EuroVelo. He would be proposing that EuroVelo took a more central role in the ECF's Vision 2030 document, which will be prepared over the coming months.