



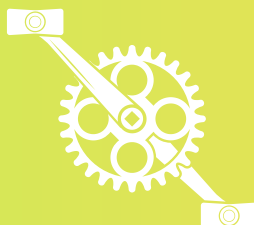
THE WHEELS OF CHANGE

# Riding Europe's Commitment to Cycling for Sustainable Change with an International Cycling Community of Practice



AN ISINNOVA & VÉLO MONDIAL  
JOINT INITIATIVE

ISINNOVA  
research innovation sustainability



Vélo Mondial

---

# THE WHEELS OF CHANGE

## **Challenges and Opportunities**

Overview of cycling's role in sustainable urban mobility, key obstacles and potential for growth in cycling infrastructure.

## **The International Cycling Community of Practice**

Details on the collaborative platform for cities, cycling practitioners and stakeholders.

## **Down the Yellow Brick Bike Lane**

Thoughts and collaborative routes for a bright cycling culture.





## Riding Europe's Commitment to Cycling for Sustainable Change

In October 2023, the European Commission introduced the Declaration on Cycling<sup>[1]</sup>, earning cheers from cycling advocates and supporters across Europe.

This initiative by Europe's leading executive body reaffirmed a commitment to cycling as a sustainable, accessible, and cost-effective transport, essential to Europe's social and economic fabric.

**The Declaration on Cycling serves as a strategic compass, shaping existing and future policies and initiatives related to cycling.**

***Will this declaration resonate where it matters - with citizens and society, and with the national, regional and local institutions responsible for redesigning public spaces as cycling-friendly environments?***

[1] [https://transport.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-11/European\\_Declaration\\_on\\_Cycling\\_en\\_0.pdf](https://transport.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-11/European_Declaration_on_Cycling_en_0.pdf)



As the climate crisis runs fast, ISINNOVA and Vèlo Mondial emphasise a rapid transformation of urban planning and mobility, highlighting the urgent need for **human-centred urban design**.

Urban landscapes require decisive actions to transform road spaces into zones of safety and accessibility for everyone, particularly the most vulnerable. While initiatives like the Slow City movement and the concept of 15-minute cities are gaining traction, a deeper, community-led shift in land redevelopment is crucial.

## FROM WORDS TO WHEELS

With the Declaration, the European Commission recognises the benefits of cycling, but this only marks the start of a new chapter in the journey.

For real progress, this commitment must be followed by firm and sustained legislative support, continued investments and an effort to change public and political perceptions about the role of cycling in modern urban environments.

### THE WHEELS OF CHANGE

### Need for Sustained Support

The 2000s witnessed significant investment in cycling through programmes such as the European CIVITAS initiative. However, direct funding has gradually declined, on the assumption that the initial investments would naturally integrate cycling into our mobility systems. Sustained support in terms of funding, technical expertise and cultural change is crucial for cities to rapidly integrate cycling into their daily mobility options.

1

### Acknowledgment of the Economic Impacts of Cycling

The economic benefits of cycling are often underestimated by policymakers and the public. Investment in cycling reduces societal costs by reducing transport-related externalities such as pollution, congestion and accidents, thereby improving public health and productivity. Cycling boosts local economies by increasing revenues in sectors such as retail, hospitality and tourism, and by increasing property values.

2

### Recognition of Cycling's Pivotal Role

Many cities have yet to fully recognize cycling's vital role in achieving climate neutrality and enhancing urban livability, a key aspect of the European Commission's Climate-neutral and Smart Mission. While the Declaration on Cycling acknowledges the importance of cycling, society still sees it as a supplementary option rather than a fundamental element of urban infrastructure.

3



## Growing Collective Capacity

One of the most effective ways to accelerate cultural and infrastructural change is for cities to connect, collaborate and build **collective capacity through mutual learning**. Ongoing research and innovation have created a vast knowledge about effective cycling strategies. This information should be utilized and applied thoughtfully, focusing on making iterative improvements and adopting proven solutions to their unique urban landscapes.



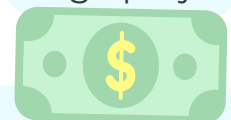
This collective approach promises wide-ranging **positive impacts across society**, in line with the economic, environmental and health benefits that cycling brings to the EU, which currently amount to an impressive €150 billion per year globally, of which over €90 billion directly benefits the environment, public health and mobility systems.



## Investments: Spending More, Better, and Faster

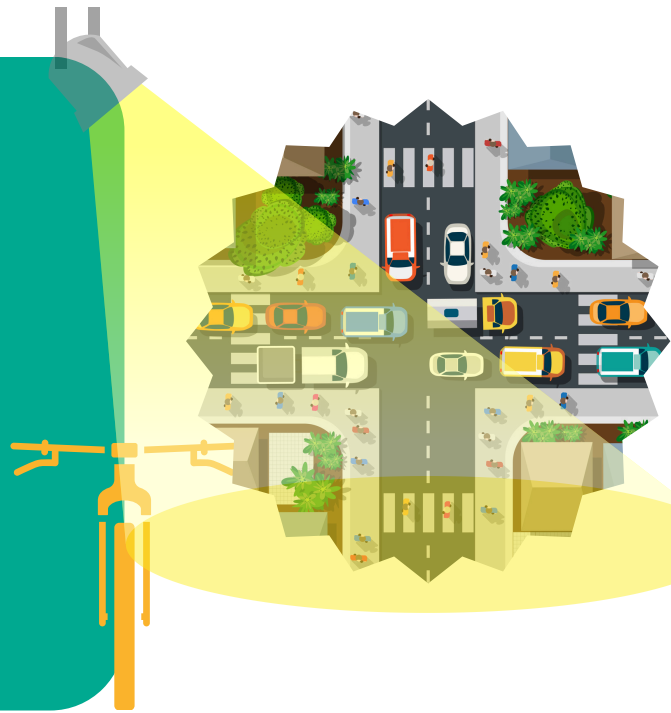
In the current EU structural funding cycle, spanning 2021 to 2027, investments in cycling infrastructure are projected to reach approximately €3.21 billion, marking a significant 30% increase from the €2.43 billion allocated in the previous cycle from 2014 to 2020. This funding will facilitate the construction of around 12,000 km of new cycling routes.

Additionally, there is **potential for further investment** through a process known as 'reprogramming' where managing authorities can revise their investment strategies mid-cycle. This adjustment could unlock an additional €4-4.8 billion in Structural Funds for cycling projects, reflecting trends observed in the previous funding cycle.



However, despite these substantial formal allocations, there remains a notable **discrepancy** between the ambitious targets set and the actual implementation of cycling projects.

For the 2014-2020 funding cycle, only €1.64 billion - or 67% - of the planned €2.43 billion in EU Structural Funds for cycling had been utilized by the end of 2022. This expenditure rate aligns with that of urban transport infrastructure but falls short of the spending rates for other road infrastructure investments, which typically range from 84% to 111% of initial commitments. This demonstrates that **cycling is still viewed as a secondary option**, not receiving the full attention it deserves from policymakers.



Funds for cycling need to be fully utilized and spent more efficiently. Investments should prioritize **long-term strategies** over piecemeal interventions, reward ambitious projects that align with cohesive and streamlined visions, and empower initiatives with clear and accountable timelines.



## Our Holistic Expertise on Cycling

**ISINNOVA** and **Vélo Mondial** have worked for almost two decades on a myriad of international projects[2] on cycling, for and with cities like Copenhagen, Dublin, Manchester, Bruges, Bordeaux, Cádiz, Rome, Turin, Tallinn, Helsinki, Krakow, Riga, Bologna, Funchal, Gothenburg, Utrecht, Amsterdam, Szeged, Burgos, Padua, London, Lambeth and Southwark, Berlin, Ploiesti, Bucharest, Barcelona, Gdansk, Sao Paulo, New York, etc.

ISINNOVA and Vélo Mondial have led **innovative cycling projects**, balancing scientific research with practical implementation. These initiatives have seen significant advances in cycling policies and infrastructure but have faced challenges due to fluctuating political support. These efforts demonstrate that, with the right approach and investment, cycling had significantly contributed to more sustainable and livable urban environments[3].

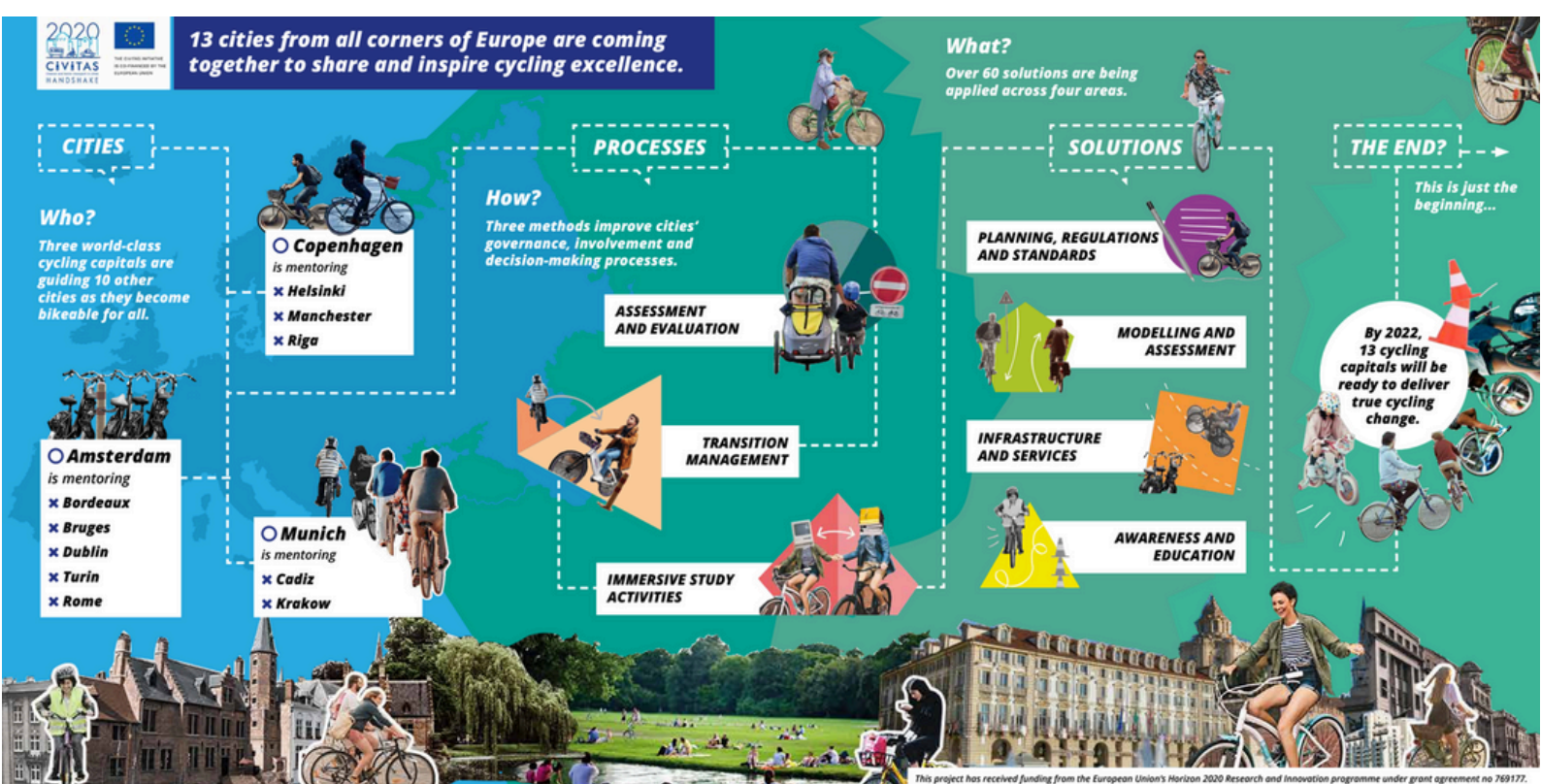
---

### THE WHEELS OF CHANGE

[2] Civitas Mmosa, Carma, Spicycles, Civitas Handshake, VeloCittà, NATCYP, Amsterdam Cycling to Sustainability, Safer Brain, LowLijn, LUTR/Plume, New Amsterdam Bike Slam, Velo Mondial 2000, Velo Mondial 2006

[3] Publications: 'New Ways to Go': Private investment in Cycling Planning & Public investment in Cycling Planning; "Enabling Cycling Cities; Ingredients for Success"; Life is a cycle, Amsterdam cycling to sustainability; Cycling on the rise, 10 Golden Rules on Bike Share systems, Handshake TV, Cycling Resource Navigator, Self-Assessment tool for cities on cycling etc.

# HANDSHAKE Legacy & Cycling Hands-On!



## EMBRACING HANDSHAKE'S LEGACY

Initiatives such as the EU-funded **CIVITAS HANDSHAKE** project highlight the importance of city cooperation and the need for facilitating actors.



*“Transforming cities into more liveable spaces by promoting cycling as a daily mode of transport is a progressive endeavour. It requires an unwavering determination to prioritise active transport, a strong political commitment to build the necessary infrastructure, and a visionary approach to harnessing external expertise.”*

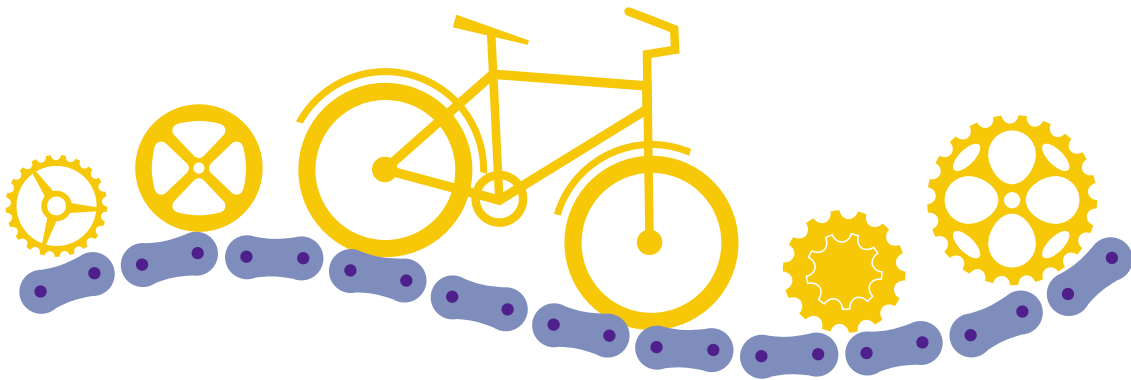
**Mario Gualdi**, ISINNOVA President & HANDSHAKE Project Coordinator

At the culmination of HANDSHAKE in August 2022, the participating cities expressed the need to ensure the sustainability of the project's many tools and services. This intention was not only to perpetuate their progress, but also to provide global cities with an **avenue for knowledge sharing**, ultimately improving the well-being of their residents.

## THE WHEELS OF CHANGE

# Building the International Cycling Community of Practice

The sustained growth of cycling remains far below the levels required for the benefit of cities and the planet. The goal of fostering cooperation between cities, exchanging good practices on cycling and new ways of thinking about a more sustainable urban environment for citizens led to the conception and development of an **International Cycling Community of Practice (ICCoP)**. The foundation of the **ICCoP** is rooted in the insights gained from HANDSHAKE and the collaboration with the cities involved in the project to extend their work, potentially, to all the cities worldwide.



**NEW!**

Building on these insights, ISINNOVA and Vèlo Mondial are **launching an International Cycling Community of Practice.**

This new platform will empower officials worldwide through collaborative, peer-to-peer exchange to accelerate the adoption of effective cycling policies.

The call to action is clear! **Cities need to connect**, harness existing cycling knowledge, adapt it to their circumstances and commit to transforming urban environments for a sustainable future.



## The International Cycling Community of Practice

The **International Cycling Community of Practice (ICCoP)** will be an innovative online resource designed to inspire cities and offer them opportunities for mutual connection. This platform will enable cities to promote and participate in various activities, including meetings, webinars, and blogs.

The ICCoP is committed to enhancing the overall quality of life for citizens while concurrently addressing the pressing concerns of climate change mitigation. The ICCoP fosters **productive dialogue**, igniting **peer-to-peer cooperation**, nurturing **capacity-building** efforts, and propelling **collaborative innovation**. It grants cities access to a **robust network** comprising researchers, consultants, associations, and industries keen on contributing actionable knowledge, services, and products, aligning with cities' aspirations.

## Meet the ICCoP TODAY

The International Cycling Community of Practice platform can be reached through its landing page. Some features are already available, while other functions will be enhanced and developed along the way.

### VISIT THE PLATFORM

[International Cycling Community of Practice \(ICCoP\)](#)



Support

Request Invitation

Login

## International Cycling Community of Practice

Connecting practitioners in the cycling community



#### Self-assessment

The self-assessment tool that you are about to enter will provide you with insight in a variety of elements of your city's cycling policy.

Start here →



#### Private space

Where all type of questions can be asked and where peers can provide confidence, discuss their city's goals and pursue their professional development as a mobility expert.

View here →



#### Content sharing

The goal of this content sharing part is to provide a living body of knowledge that members can both use and populate.

View here →



#### Support

This page is meant for public and private institutions and companies which support the ICCoP and its vision on cycling.

View here →

## Join Us in Building TOMORROW's ICCoP

The International Cycling Community of Practise platform will cover everything that institutions, stakeholders of cycling, authorized representatives, and citizens need to know about the latest policies on cycling, best practices, and legislation.

The platform will have a private space with online resources dedicated to city representatives who want to connect and exchange knowledge and materials. The purpose is to give to the platform the following structure:



**Up-to-date cycling information:** Access to cycling resources, including comprehensive referencematerials, specialized cycling components, and best practices essential for informed policy decisions and investments.

**City-specific cycling insights:** Dive into the practical experiences of various cities, tapping into the knowledge amassed by the 13 HANDSHAKE cities and other networks such as the Dutch Cycling Embassy and the European Cycling Federation.



**Innovative cycling assessment tool:** A unique tool for cities to assess their cycling capabilities, identify gaps, and enhance their efforts.

**Networking opportunities:** Facilitating interaction between cities, breaking down isolation barriers and promoting borderless communities of practice.



**Interactive platform for learning and sharing:** A dynamic stage for members to exchange ideas, inspire, motivate, and empower each other through participatory learning.

**Expert support:** Access to expertise for seeking policy direction, academic research, technical aid, solutions, infrastructure development, technological insights, and services.



One of the most useful resources that the International Cycling Community of Practice intends to build is the **Private Space**, a specialized segment of the platform tailored for civil servants. This dedicated area allows members to discuss and share insights about their daily work and **challenges in urban cycling planning**.

In such a secure environment, practitioners can pose questions, exchange knowledge, and seek advice from peers and experienced mentors. Additionally, the private space will host webinars, seminars, and other educational events designed to provide mentees with both **inspiration and practical knowledge**.

Along with the Private Space, another innovation of the ICCoP will be the **Cycling Resource Navigator: a ChatGPT-based chatbot with hundreds of curated documents pre-loaded**. It is a tool designed to assist city planners and civil servants by providing a comprehensive overview and actionable information on cycling infrastructure planning and policy development.

The navigator serves as both an **educational hub and a practical guide**, offering access to case studies, design guides, policy recommendations, and project summaries. These resources equip policymakers with insights for enhancing cycling infrastructure, **promoting cycling culture, and integrating cycling into broader mobility strategies**. By fostering a better understanding of cycling benefits and challenges, the Cycling Resource Navigator aids cities in achieving more sustainable, healthy, and livable urban spaces.

## The International Cycling Community of Practice Framework



Learn more about the International Community of Practice project and explore its framework in the resources below.

- [Declaration on Cycling](#)
- [International Cycling Community of Practice structure](#)
- [Self-assessment questionnaire for city representatives](#)
- [The ABC of Bikenomics](#)

## The Wheels of Change

The European Commission's Declaration on Cycling represents a critical step towards acknowledging the immense value of cycling in achieving sustainable urban mobility. Yet, fully integrating cycling into Europe's urban fabric will need more than just formal commitments: it will require ongoing financial and cultural backing to overcome the challenges ahead.

The efforts of organizations like ISINNOVA and Vèlo Mondial, through initiatives like the **International Cycling Community of Practice (ICCoP)**, show how powerful collective knowledge and collaboration can be in speeding up the adoption of cycling as a core part of modern urban life.

The economic, environmental, and social benefits of cycling are clear, but realizing these requires a concerted effort from cities, policymakers, and stakeholders alike. By harnessing the tools, resources, and networks available, Europe can move forward towards a future where **cycling is not just an alternative, but a cornerstone of sustainable urban living.**



## About ISINNOVA



ISINNOVA, the Institute of Studies for the Integration of Systems, is an independent research institute that supports international, national and local public bodies, as well as private organisations, as they pursue sustainable visions and policies. ISINNOVA ideates and runs cross-discipline and cross-sector research and innovation projects that bring together public authorities, industries, research institutions and civil society. ISINNOVA's research co-creates long-term visions on systemic and strategic development plans.

## About Vèlo Mondial



**Vélo Mondial**

Vélo Mondial, founded in 1999, is an international network and organisation dedicated to promoting cycling as a sustainable and practical mode of transportation. The organisation plays a crucial role in fostering international collaboration and knowledge exchange with a particular effort on highlighting the environmental, economic, and health benefits of cycling. Vélo Mondial has significantly contributed to the global movement towards making cities more sustainable, and resilient by positioning cycling as a vital component of urban mobility systems.

## LET'S RIDE DOWN THE YELLOW BRICK BIKE LANE TOGETHER

### Contacts

**ISINNOVA:** [www.isinnova.org](http://www.isinnova.org)

**Mario Gualdi:** [mgualdi@isinnova.org](mailto:mgualdi@isinnova.org)

**Vélo Mondial:**

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/pascalvandennoort/>

**Pascal J.W. van den Noort:** [operations@velomondial.net](mailto:operations@velomondial.net)

