

## **National cycle routes of Cyprus - a model for others and a part of EuroVelo**

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### **Summary**

Cyprus is a minor island situated between Africa, Asia and Europe. It has now become a member of the European Community as well as a part of the EuroVelo project!

Three years ago the island had nearly no facilities for cyclists and not a big tradition for cycling. However we were invited by the Cyprus Tourist Board to plan a whole national cycle route network, which is now being implemented including the EuroVelo part. And more than that: the routes are now being implemented!

The national cycle route network has one main itinerary to be a Cyprus Cycling Circuit – eventual called the Aphrodite Cycle Route. This will be a very visible product to marketing and will separate from similar products like Mallorca, where they do not yet have signed routes. It has been the experience that good names and themes of cycle routes have good effect in order to attract cyclists. It does of course pass some of the Aphrodite sights.

The proposed circuit has been divided into 7 stages, so that you could use a week to get around – or two weeks and eventually stay two nights every place and take a local cycle route as a roundtrip nearby. The MTB area could be integrated into this concept.

This planning concept could probably be relevant to use in many other places in the world. A part of the strategy is to link routes together in a network, like we have done in the EuroVelo project. This will also be explained and there will be given a brief status for the whole European cycle route project.

### **EuroVelo Background**

EuroVelo is the project, initiated by the European Cyclists Federation (ECF) in 1995, to develop 12 long-distance international cycle routes spanning all of Europe – both within and beyond the EU. It is being developed by organisations representing most countries in Europe, coordinated by the ECF, Frie Fugle (DK) and Sustrans (UK).

EuroVelo is already happening. The proposed routes, totalling 65,000 km, are based largely on the cycle routes already existing or planned, at local, regional and national level, in the countries through which they pass. EuroVelo is not simply about creating routes - it is about linking them into a pan-European whole. This continental perspective has allowed the EuroVelo vision to support a number of route creation projects since its launch.

The future for cycling has never been brighter. European and national policies, on global climate change, local air quality, road safety, tourism development among others, all suggest the possibility of promoting cycling. To do this, champions of cycling need need to act on various levels to change the public agenda.

### **Visions in bicycle planning**

EuroVelo is certainly delivering the vision by coordinating the creation of a network of 65000 km of cycle routes through the whole of Europe.

And more than that: a great part of the visions have already been implemented. Especially in countries in eastern part of Europe like Poland, Baltic states, Czech Republic, Slovakia and the southern countries like Spain, Italy and Cyprus many initiatives to built cycle routes have been taken thanks to the EuroVelo project.



*The famous Danube Cycle route – part of EuroVelo 6.*

### **Examples of achievements of EuroVelo**

EuroVelo has created a very strong brand image despite the limited resources available. This has supported the creation of many sections of route in individual local projects. Examples include the 100 km Destra Po in northern Italy, the Silesia routes network in Poland, EuroVelo route 9 through the eastern Weinviertel in Austria, or the Baltic Sea route being developed through eight countries.

EuroVelo route 7, between Berlin and Copenhagen – a very important strategic route in its own right as well as 635 km of EuroVelo route 7. The whole EV 7 from North Cape to Malta has been studied and the route report is now available at [www.EuroVelo.org](http://www.EuroVelo.org)

EuroVelo Route 6 from Atlantic Ocean to Black Sea is being implemented as an EU interreg project.

EuroVelo has also helped to harmonise standards across Europe, both by the production and distribution of the EuroVelo Guidelines for Implementation and by direct assistance, such as to Estonia and Slovenia in planning national cycle signage systems (based on the system used in Denmark and the UK). EuroVelo News issue 7, 8 and 9 was produced by Sustrans, circulated direct to 1,300 European, national and regional politicians and officials, and thousands more copies distributed by the national representatives.



### Cyprus: From visions to reality

A special example of planning is Cyprus where we planned a national cycle route network which is now being implemented including the EuroVelo part. The Cyprus Tourist Organisation (CTO) invited us to come and help developing cycle tourism. Besides planning the national network we helped to build up capacity to implement and maintain the routes and to promote co-operation between different sectors in Cyprus. A seminar where everybody met and discussed the network turned out to be very successful.

Some basic element: The plan itself for national cycle routes is a good vision to have for politicians to refer to and also in general to promote Cyprus as a cycle friendly island. The existence of an overall plan will make the investments in the coming years more efficient. For example when some roads are changed, maintained etc. and a cycle route is planned to be there, then implement the facility at the same time. Besides when CTO produces guides and maps, it should be done according to the overall plan.

What can Cyprus learn from Denmark? You can use your bicycle all year around and the bicycle is a mean of transportation. The ecological way of thinking and planning in Denmark might be transferred to Cyprus. It's important to mention that cycle tourism is very sustainable – tourists cycling around the country don't destroy the nature and they get in good contact with local people. Bicycle Tourism should have a good basis in climate and landscape resources in Cyprus compared with Denmark. And especially in wintertime, where people from Northern Europe like to go south, Cyprus with excellent climate and hotel capacity in winter is obvious. Also compared with Mallorca, Cyprus has many advantages.



### Cyprus National Cycle Routes

I propose a national cycle route network with one main itinerary to be a Cyprus Cycling Circuit – eventually called the Aphrodite Cycle Route. This will be a very visible product to marketing and will separate from similar products like Mallorca, where they do not have signposted routes.

It has been the experience that good names and themes of cycle routes have good effect in order to attract cyclists. So this national cycle route going around should be named Cyprus Cycling Circuit (CCC) – or even better the Aphrodite Cycle Route (of Cyprus). It does of course pass some of the Aphrodite sights.

The proposed circuit has been divided into 7 stages, so that you could use a week to get around – or two weeks and eventually stay two nights every place and take a local cycle route as a roundtrip nearby. The MTB area could be integrated into this concept.

Since most foreign tourists will arrive in Larnaca (and Pafos, but mainly charter tourists), I have chosen to let the numbering start here instead of the capital Nicosia. Off course you can start everywhere you like and take only part of the route. N1 – N7 makes the circuit and with N8 - N11

you have a lot of flexibility. For example to take a trip of 2-3 days from Pafos to Troodos and back via Lemesos. See map of routes in appendix.

N 1 km	Larnaca – Lemesos	68
N 2 km	Lemesos – Pafos	78
N 3	Pafos - Polis 38 km	
N 4 km	Polis - Troodos	89
N 5 km	Troodos - Nicosia	73
N 6	Nicosia – Agia Napa	106 km
N 7 km	Agia Napa - Larnaca	38
N1 – N 7	Cyprus cycle Circuit	490 km
N 8 47 km	Pafos – Troodos	
N 9	Lemesos – Troodos – Polis	123 km
N 10 66 km	Nicosia – Lemesos	
N 11 60 km	Larnaca – Nicosia	

Total length of national network proposed: 786 km. Parts overlap so in reality ca. 700 km.

We have studied the roads and traffic flow and here are some of the studies. There has not been time enough to go into more details, but this can be done by the authorities involved when the systematical methods have now been introduced. Also probably some of the proposed roads could be changed when you reach a more detailed planning stage.

The network can be used in many different ways. People can cycle around Cyprus in one week – 7 stages in Cyprus Cycle Circuit (Aphrodite Cycle Route), or use 2 weeks and stay an extra night every place and takes a roundtrip where local cycle routes or MTB trail are available.

So maybe the method can be used in other cases where you have to start from almost zero.



More information about cycling in Cyprus: [www.visitcyprus.org.cy](http://www.visitcyprus.org.cy)

## References

1. EuroVelo guidelines for Implementation. 2002
2. EuroVelo News No. 7 and 9 (about Cyprus)
3. [www.eurovelo.org](http://www.eurovelo.org)
4. [www.visitcyprus.org.cy](http://www.visitcyprus.org.cy)