



# EuroVelo 8 - Mediterranean Route

# Transnational Route

# Evaluation Report

MEDCYCLETOUR Project **Interreg**   
*Mediterranean*  
 MEDCYCLETOUR

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[www.eurovelo8.com](http://www.eurovelo8.com)



Project co-financed by the European  
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## 1 Background and report objectives

This Transnational Route Evaluation Report is part of the requirements formulated in the MEDCYCLETLOUR application form (Ref. 629, version 3), Work Package 3 on testing. WP3 is coordinated by project partner Friuli Venezia Giulia based on the methodology provided by the European Cyclists' Federation (developed and tested in numerous former EU projects).

EuroVelo 8 – Mediterranean Route is a long-distance cycle route connecting the whole Mediterranean from Cádiz to Cyprus. It has a coherent and clear theme based on the Mediterranean Sea and culture in this region. The route is open to all types of users (e.g. classic cycle tourists, tourists occasionally cycling during their holiday, sportive / fitness / recreational cyclists, commuters etc.).

The overall objective of the MEDCYCLETLOUR project is to use this route as a tool to influence regional and national policies in favour of sustainable and responsible tourism, providing transnational solutions in coastal areas across the Mediterranean. The main outputs will be action plans and policy recommendations (to generate investments in the route conditions); pilot actions (to test the proposed developments); and updated information and promotion related to EuroVelo 8 (to attract visitors). The MEDCYCLETLOUR (EuroVelo 8 – Mediterranean Route project) is financed by the Interreg Mediterranean Programme and aims to improve the quality of EuroVelo 8 – Mediterranean Route and develop it as a transnational touristic product.

The project, co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund<sup>1</sup>, will benefit national, regional and local authorities, service providers and, ultimately, cycle tourists. Taking a transnational approach will enable common challenges (e.g. lack of route infrastructure, missing cycling friendly services, weak branding and promotion) to be tackled together and best practices to be shared, thereby avoiding duplication and increasing the effectiveness and positive social, economic and environmental impacts.

The purpose of this Transnational Route Evaluation Report is to have clear, up-to-date information about the route and its quality, including mapping, route conditions, services and

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<sup>1</sup> The content of this report represents the views of the author only and is his/her sole responsibility. It cannot be considered to reflect the views of any body of the European Union. The European Commission does not accept any responsibility for use that may be made of the information it contains.



promotion. The report will also make recommendations at which user groups the route should be targeted.

This report will first explain the project's organisation (chapter 2), define the itinerary of the assessed route (chapter 3) and provide some methodological explanations (chapter 4), before summarising the key findings of the route assessment for infrastructure (chapter 5), services (chapter 6) and promotion (chapter 7). Chapter 8 will present the conclusions, while the annex offers some more methodological explanations.



*Canal du Midi, France / © Celia Benisty, Les Poulets Bicyclettes*

## 2 Organisation

Following the route from Cádiz in the west of Spain to Cyprus, the following partners and regions were involved in the survey-related activities of the project:

- Spain: Regional Government of Andalusia (lead partner)
- Spain: Regional Government of Catalonia



- France: Conseil Départemental des Alpes-Maritimes
- Italy: Consortium Oltrepo Mantovano
- Italy: Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia
- Slovenia: Regional development centre Koper
- Croatia: Cluster for Eco-Social Innovation and Development CEDRA
- Croatia: Croatian National Tourist Board
- Greece: Region of Western Greece
- Cyprus: Cyprus Tourism Organization

In addition, the itinerary of EuroVelo 8 in the Spanish region of Valencia was surveyed at the same time but outside of the frame of the project. It has been included here because its addition provides a more complete picture of the current route status.

Route surveys were done in each of the project partners' regions. Based on these route surveys, each of the project partners and regions prepared a regional or national route evaluation report, describing the status of the route in their respective region or country. The two Croatian partners prepared a single report for Croatia. These reports can be downloaded from the MEDCYCLETOUR website at <https://medcycletour.interreg-med.eu/>:

- [Andalusia, Spain](#)
- [Catalonia, Spain](#)
- [Alpes-Maritimes, France](#)
- [Mantova, Italy](#)
- [Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Italy](#)
- [Slovenia](#)
- [Croatia](#)
- [Region of Western Greece](#)
- [Cyprus](#)

On the basis of the data collected during these surveys, the European Cyclists' Federation (ECF) prepared this transnational route evaluation report. The report summarises the key findings for the route as a whole, gives an overview of the route status, points out common challenges and highlights specific observations on different parts of the route.

The ECF has developed the methodology on which the various route assessments were based and has trained the route inspectors. It is very experienced in evaluating cross-national European cycle routes and has demonstrated this know-how in numerous previous projects.



The ECF coordinates the EuroVelo network, which is a growing network of 16 long distance cycle routes connecting and uniting the whole European continent at a length of more than 70,000 km. For more information on this, see [www.eurovelo.com](http://www.eurovelo.com).

### 3 Itinerary

The surveyed itinerary of EuroVelo 8 – Mediterranean Route can be viewed on <http://www.eurovelo8.com/>.



EuroVelo 8 connects 11 countries at a total length of about 5,900 km. Seven of these countries were involved in the project. Together with Valencia, the total length of the surveyed route covered in this report amounts to 3,899 km, distributed across these regions/countries:

Andalusia	681 km
Valencia	521 km
Cataluña	536 km
Alpes-Maritimes	102 km
Mantovano	176 km
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	215 km
Slovenia	35 km



Croatia	1,116 km
Western Greece	283 km
Cyprus	234 km
TOTAL	3,899 km

The surveyed parts of the route cover about 66% of the EuroVelo 8 cycle route's estimated total length of 5,900 km, with varying topography, levels of cycle tourism development, urbanisation and road safety. Although there are still parts of the route that were not covered by the survey, the data collected so far allows to have a good general overview of the route conditions and similarities in the challenges encountered.

## 4 Brief methodological explanations

To ensure a consistent approach to route evaluation, the survey was carried out by route inspectors fully trained by the ECF. The basis of the training was the EuroVelo European Certification Standard<sup>2</sup>, describing in a systematic way different aspects of route quality:

- Infrastructure (continuity, route components, surface and width, gradients, attractiveness, signing and public transport)
- Services (accommodation, food, bicycle and other services)
- Promotion (web and printed materials, information on the route)

The on-field survey has been complemented by desktop research to collect or verify additional data, e.g. on available public transport connections or services.

The same EuroVelo European Certification Standard was applied throughout this report to systematically evaluate the survey findings. The standard defines three different criteria levels:

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<sup>2</sup> The standard and relevant manuals are available at: <http://www.eurovelo.org/routes/european-certification-standard/>



<b>Essential criteria</b>	Catering to <i>regular</i> cycle tourists.	Must be met along the <i>entire</i> route for certification.
<b>Important criteria</b>	Catering to <i>occasional</i> cycle tourists.	Must be met <i>along at least 70%</i> of the route for certification.
<b>Additional criteria</b>	Catering to <i>demanding</i> cycle tourists (e.g. families with young children, cyclists with tandems, bike trailers, hand bikes, etc.).	Meeting the criteria is optional and depends on the aspiration level. Can be used for promotion.

For the field work, the route inspectors collected the data using an app developed by the ECF for this purpose. On each daily section, they stopped after each kilometre and entered the data into the app. The data was then uploaded to the ECF server and later analysed. The route inspectors also took photos during the field work.



*Snapshot of the app, and route in Western Greece*

#### 4.1 Distinction route survey / certification

EuroVelo routes can be certified to highlight a particularly high level of quality. It is important to note the difference between a route survey and the formal EuroVelo certification:

- Survey is the process of collecting and evaluating route data. A survey is always required for the certification of EuroVelo routes, but it can also be used outside the EuroVelo network or at an early development stage to identify investment needs.
- Certification is confirmation that the route meets at least the minimum criteria set in the ECS. Only EuroVelo routes in their entirety or their major sections (at least 300 km long and with clearly defined origins and destinations) can be certified.





## 4.2 Overview of the sections

The route was divided into so-called daily sections, i.e. stretches of about 50-60 km in length that can be easily cycled during one day. This served the purpose of having smaller units of analysis and providing a basis for the marketing of certain stretches. The following 83 daily sections have been surveyed between June 2017 and April 2018:

Region	Start section	End section	Daily sections	km	Survey start date	Survey end date
Andalusia	1	16	16	681	June 2017	Oct. 2017
Valencia	29	38	10	521	July 2017	Sept. 2017
Cataluña	41	51	11	536	July 2017	Sept. 2017
France (AM)	70	72	3	102	Aug. 2017	Nov. 2017
Italy (Mantova)	81	84	4	176	July 2017	July 2017
Italy (FVG)	86	94	6	215	April 2018	April 2018
Slovenia	95	95	1	35	June 2017	July 2017
Croatia	97	116	20	1,116	July 2017	March 2018
Western Greece R	138	145	8	283	Oct. 2017	Jan. 2018
Cyprus	154	157	4	234	Oct. 2017	Oct. 2017
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>3,899</b>	<b>June 2017</b>	<b>April 2018</b>

The basic units in this report are so-called minor sections, i.e. stretches of 1 km, and daily sections, i.e. stretches of about 50 km. A certain phenomenon on a minor section was noted in the data if it appeared on a continuous stretch of at least 200 m. If a minor section included a few different infrastructural components or for example public roads with varying amounts and speeds of traffic, the route inspectors picked the one (at least 200 m in length) that is the most problematic or challenging for users. The data for infrastructure type, width, traffic volume and traffic speed for one minor section will then refer to the same infrastructure component, which can measure between 200 and 1,000 m in length on a minor section but can of course also continue on the following minor sections.

The following daily sections were surveyed:

Section	Start (Place)	Stop (Place)	Country	Region	km
1	Cádiz	Conil	Spain	Andalusia	53
2	Conil	Facinas	Spain	Andalusia	51



Section	Start (Place)	Stop (Place)	Country	Region	km
3	Facinas	Estación ffcc San Roque La Linea	Spain	Andalusia	42
4	Est ffcc San Roque La Linea	Estepona	Spain	Andalusia	48
5	Estepona	Marbella	Spain	Andalusia	32
6	Marbella	Fuengirola	Spain	Andalusia	32
7	Fuengirola	Málaga	Spain	Andalusia	32
8	Málaga	Torre del Mar	Spain	Andalusia	34
9	Torre del Mar	Almuñecar	Spain	Andalusia	47
10	Almuñecar	Castell de Ferro	Spain	Andalusia	46
11	Castell de Ferro	Adra	Spain	Andalusia	38
12	Adra	Almeria	Spain	Andalusia	61
13	Almeria	San José, Cabo de Gata	Spain	Andalusia	45
14	San José, Cabo de Gata	Carboneras	Spain	Andalusia	50
15	Carboneras	Villaricos	Spain	Andalusia	35
16	Villaricos	Pozo de la Higuera (Pulpí)	Spain	Andalusia	35
29	Desamparados	Elche	Spain	Valencia	63
30	Elche	Alicante	Spain	Valencia	45
31	Alicante	Castalla	Spain	Valencia	47
32	Castalla	Muro de Alcoy	Spain	Valencia	45
33	Muro de Alcoy	Gandia	Spain	Valencia	44
34	Gandia	Valencia	Spain	Valencia	77
35	Valencia	Sagunto	Spain	Valencia	35
36	Sagunto	Castellón de la Plana	Spain	Valencia	54
37	Castellón de la Plana	Playa la Romana	Spain	Valencia	49
38	Playa la Romana	Border Valencia/Catalonia	Spain	Valencia	62
41	Sant Feliu de Guíxols	Hostalric	Spain	Cataluña	60
42	Hostalric	Mataró	Spain	Cataluña	65
43	Hostalric	Granollers	Spain	Cataluña	42
44	Mataró/Granollers	Besòs	Spain	Cataluña	50
45	Besòs	Llobregat	Spain	Cataluña	21
46	Llobregat	St. Vicenç de Calders	Spain	Cataluña	55
47	Llobregat	Vilafranca del Penedès	Spain	Cataluña	65
48	Vilafranca del Penedès	El Vendrell - Tarragona	Spain	Cataluña	62
49	Tarragona	Vila-seca - Vandellòs i l'Hospitalet de l'Infant	Spain	Cataluña	42
50	Vandellòs i l'Hospitalet de l'Infant	Amposta	Spain	Cataluña	48



Section	Start (Place)	Stop (Place)	Country	Region	km
51	Amposta	Ulldecona	Spain	Cataluña	26
70	Le Tignet	Cannes	France	Alpes-Maritimes	31
71	Cannes	Nice	France	Alpes-Maritimes	34
72	Nice	Menton	France	Alpes-Maritimes	37
81	Viadana (West border of Mantova Province on left riverside)	Borgo Virgilio	Italy	Mantova	42
82	Borgo Virgilio	Ostiglia (East border of Mantova Province on left riverside)	Italy	Mantova	44
83	Felonica (East border of Mantova Province on right riverside)	Quingentole	Italy	Mantova	46
84	Quingentole	Suzzara (West border of Mantova Province on right riverside)	Italy	Mantova	44
89	Border FVG-Veneto	Lignano Sabbiadoro	Italy	Friuli-Venezia Giulia	9
90	Lignano Sabbiadoro	Marano Lagunare	Italy	Friuli-Venezia Giulia	38
91	Marano Lagunare	Grado	Italy	Friuli-Venezia Giulia	43
92	Grado	Monfalcone	Italy	Friuli-Venezia Giulia	39
93	Monfalcone	Trieste	Italy	Friuli-Venezia Giulia	67
94	Trieste	Border Ita-Slo Rabuiese	Italy	Friuli-Venezia Giulia	19
95	Škofije (border Slovenia - Italy)	Sečovlje (border Slovenia - Croatia)	Slovenia	Slovenia	35
97	border Slovenia	Vrsar	Croatia	Croatia	76
98	Vrsar	Pula	Croatia	Croatia	73
99	Pula	Nedeščina	Croatia	Croatia	85
100	Nedeščina	Rijeka	Croatia	Croatia	59
101	Rijeka	Bater	Croatia	Croatia	57
102	Bater	Krasno Polje	Croatia	Croatia	52
103	Krasno Polje	Gacka River Source	Croatia	Croatia	41
104	Gacka River Source	Gospić	Croatia	Croatia	47
105	Gospić	Lovinac	Croatia	Croatia	42
106	Lovinac	Maslenica	Croatia	Croatia	51
107	Maslenica	Zadar	Croatia	Croatia	60
108	Zadar	Pakoštane	Croatia	Croatia	44
109	Pakoštane	Šibenik	Croatia	Croatia	48
110	Šibenik	Trogir	Croatia	Croatia	56



Section	Start (Place)	Stop (Place)	Country	Region	km
111	Trogir	Stobreč (Split)	Croatia	Croatia	40
112	Stobreč (Split)	Makarska	Croatia	Croatia	66
113	Makarska	Trpanj	Croatia	Croatia	57
114	Trpanj	Ston	Croatia	Croatia	54
115	Ston	Dubrovnik	Croatia	Croatia	56
116	Dubrovnik	border Montenegro	Croatia	Croatia	52
138	Sikoula (Boundary of RWG with Region of Epirus)	Amfilochia	Greece	Western Greece	32
139	Amfilochia	Vonitsa	Greece	Western Greece	35
140	Vonitsa	Mitikas	Greece	Western Greece	35
141	Mitikas	Astakos	Greece	Western Greece	31
142	Astakos	Mesolonghi	Greece	Western Greece	49
143	Mesolonghi	Antirrio	Greece	Western Greece	33
144	Antirrio	Aigio	Greece	Western Greece	35
145	Aigio	Egira (Boundary of RWG with Region of Peloponnese)	Greece	Western Greece	33
154	Ayia Napa	Larnaca	Cyprus	Cyprus	61
155	Larnaca	Tochni	Cyprus	Cyprus	64
156	Tochni	Limassol	Cyprus	Cyprus	34
157	Limassol	Paphos	Cyprus	Cyprus	75

## 5 Infrastructure

The application of the European Certification Standard to the survey results shows that 95% of the evaluated route meets the Essential criteria in terms of continuity, route components, surface and attractiveness. The route also meets the Important criteria on 83% of its length and the Additional criteria on 53% of its length, covering the needs of the most demanding users.

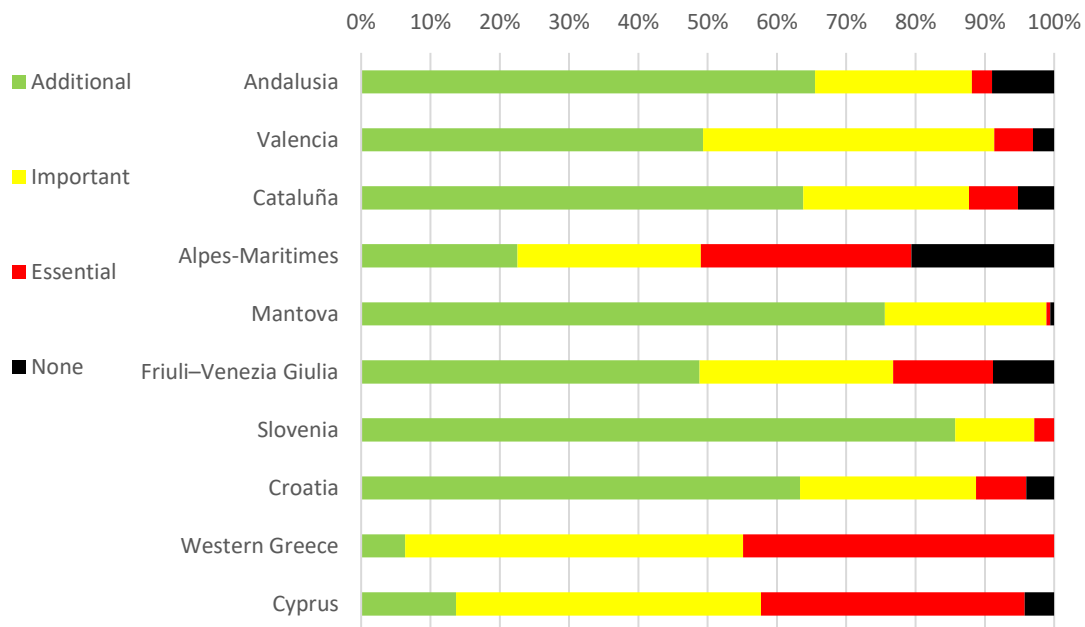
Existing EuroVelo 8 infrastructure varies greatly between different countries and regions. For example, as much as 74% of the route consists of dedicated cycle paths in Slovenia, while this share stands at just 5% in neighbouring Croatia. The Mantua province in Italy meets the essential and important criteria on 99% of the route's length and the additional criteria on



76% of the route's length, while the stretch on the daily section between Nice and Menton in France meets the Essential criteria only on 46% of its length.

The following graph provides an overview of each region's level of compliance with the European Certification Standard (excluding signing and attractiveness). It shows the shares of the surveyed 10 regions that meet or do not meet the essential, important and additional criteria of the ECS. For instance, the route in Andalusia meets the essential criteria on 91% of its length, while 88% meet the essential and the important criteria and 65% meet all the criteria, i.e. the essential, important and additional criteria combined. Black-coloured parts of a route stretch show which share does not meet any of the criteria, illustrating which sections do not fulfil the minimum requirements (100% of the essential criteria must be met). In this example, the route in Andalusia does not meet the essential criteria on 9% of its length.

### Infrastructure criteria met by region



In this chapter, we will look at the route as a whole and examine its level of compliance with the ECS by criteria type.

## 5.1 Continuity

The basic aspect for any cycle route is the continuity of the ride. The route should not contain any legal or physical disruptions that make it illegal or impossible to travel on. All natural (river, cliff etc.) or artificial (railway, motorway etc.) barriers should be crossed with adequate cycling infrastructure (bridge, ferry, subway etc.)

Legal disruptions of the route prevent cyclists from continuing on their path. Seven of these kilometres were identified on the route. They include:

- Sections passing through private land without right-of-use agreements or through land with unclear legal status.
- Sections where the only possible or most logical route itinerary runs along roads where cycling is forbidden (motorways, expressways or similar heavy traffic roads).
- One-way streets with no contraflow cycling allowed.

Most of these problems were identified in Friuli-Venezia Giulia (FVG), Italy. However, the route is in fact open, allowing cyclists to push their bikes on the affected stretches.

Notable physical disruptions include:

- Stairs. The fittest cyclists, travelling with light luggage, can carry their bike up or down stairs, but for the majority of potential users this is an important or even unpassable obstacle. A total of 11 sets of stairs that were difficult to surmount were encountered during the route survey, most of them in Valencia and Catalonia, while there were 41 sets of stairs in total that were classified as easy to surmount. Most of these “easy” stairs could be found in Andalusia and Valencia.
- Chicanes and other bottlenecks with less than 1.3 m clearance. Such chicanes make it difficult to use the route by bicycles with trailers, tandems, hand-bikes etc. They were encountered from time to time in most of the regions, with the exception of Catalonia and Western Greece.



*Road owned by Consorzio Bonifica Bassa Friulana, where entry is legally forbidden, in FVG region, Italy.*




- Not rideable surface (deep sand, mud, big rocks etc.) – this will be covered in the section on surface.



*Chicane with less than 1.3 m clearance on daily section "81: Viadana (West border of Mantova Province on left riverside) - Borgo Virgilio" in Italy*

Continuity disruptions by region:

Region	Entry forbidden	Stairs - difficult	Stairs easy	Chicanes <1.3m
Andalusia	0	0	17	8
Valencia	2	4	15	1
Cataluña	0	3	5	0
Alpes-Maritimes	0	0	0	1
Mantova	0	0	0	3
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	4	2	1	13
Slovenia	0	0	0	1
Croatia	0	2	3	8
Western Greece	0	0	0	0
Cyprus	0	0	0	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>36</b>

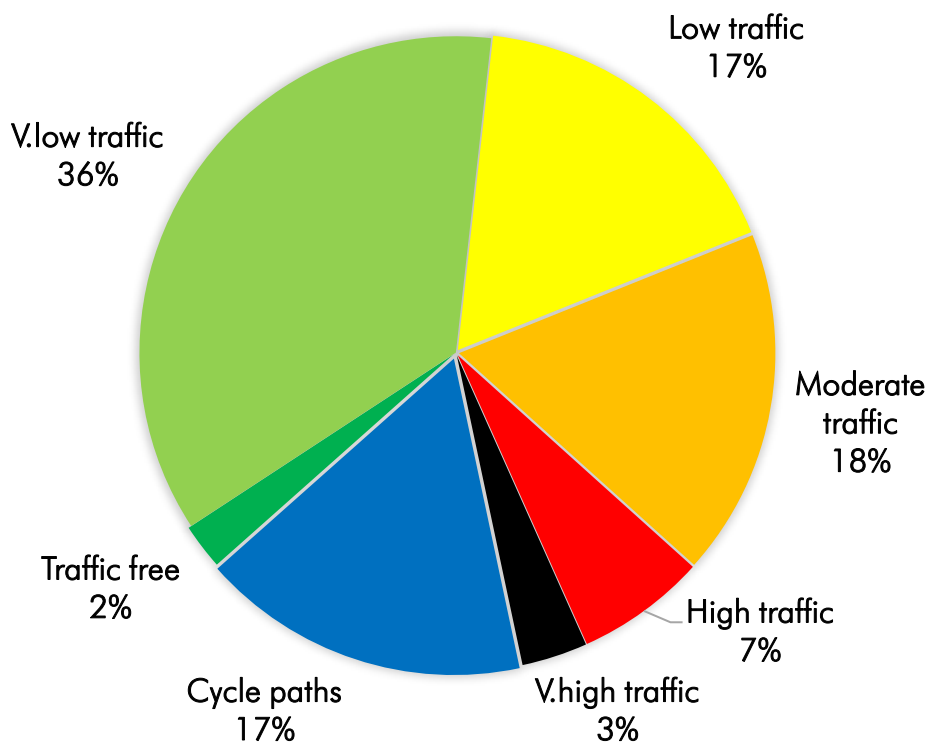
 = Does not meet essential criteria     = Does not meet important criteria     = Does not meet additional criteria



## 5.2 Route components

Different kinds of infrastructure components can be combined and integrated to form a continuous EuroVelo route. The survey process has been designed to monitor the share of different components on the route under assessment and to give verifiable evidence of whether the chosen course is suitable for the assumed groups of users (again related to the three different levels of experience). Hence the occurrence of varying types of infrastructure components (e.g. public roads, cycle lanes, cycle paths) and relevant parameters (width, volume and speed of motorised traffic) that have been monitored down to the scale of a single kilometre. In addition, safety on crossings was evaluated as well. Note that the "Route components" criterion focuses on the risk of collision with motorised vehicles. Other elements of road safety are included in the Continuity, Surface and Width criteria, while social safety is considered as part of the Attractiveness criteria.

### ROUTE COMPONENTS



19% of the surveyed distance comprises dedicated cycle paths, greenways or traffic-free roads (e.g. water management or forest roads). There is very low traffic on another 36% and





low traffic on 17% of the route, also perfectly usable for cycle tourism. The focus in action planning should be on sections with very high (3%) or high traffic (7%). The highest share of stretches with high or very high traffic was identified in France Alpes-Maritimes (51% of the route in the region) and Cyprus (35% of the route in the region).<sup>3</sup>

### Traffic volume and speed

Traffic is categorised as a function of the volume of cars and speed. During the survey, the route inspectors have counted traffic units. The following table shows which shares of the route fall into which traffic category, depending on the different levels of traffic volume and speed. The traffic categories range from traffic-free/very low (green) to very high (black):

	30 km/h or lower	31 to 50 km/h	51 to 79 km/h	80 km/h or over
traffic free & cycle paths	19.1%			
1-500 units/day	14.0%	14.9%	4.5%	1.5%
501-2 000 units/day	2.3%	8.6%	5.6%	0.7%
2 001-4 000 units/day	1.5%	10.1%	6.7%	1.4%
4 001-10 000 units/day	0.3%	2.9%	2.3%	0.7%
>10 000 units/day	0.1%	1.1%	1.1%	0.6%

 = traffic-free / very low traffic     = low traffic     = moderate traffic     = high traffic     = very high

In addition, 59 very dangerous and 270 dangerous crossings were identified by the route inspectors. Common challenges and safety hazards for cyclists on crossings included large roundabouts, conflicts with heavy traffic, limitations of visibility or cyclists having to turn left across several lanes of traffic to follow the route. Many of them were registered in Catalonia.

### 5.3 Surface

Road surfaces of EuroVelo routes under assessment have to be built according to the relevant (national / regional) technical standards and prescriptions. Considering that EuroVelo routes should play a major role within national cycle networks, certified EuroVelo routes should provide consolidated, high quality surfaces. The surface should be suitable for use by cyclists

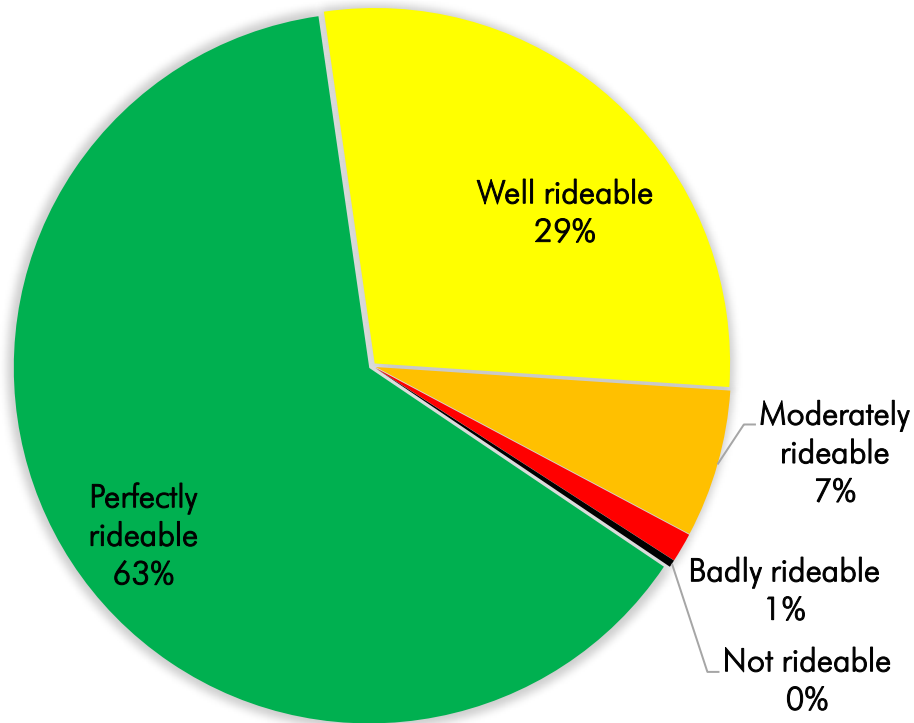
<sup>3</sup> Please refer to the annex for a more detailed explanation of the traffic-categories methodology.



with any type of trekking or touring bike in normal weather conditions during the local cycling season. It should be smooth and solid enough to ride, so it should either be asphalted or paved with another resistant material. In exceptional circumstances, loose material may be used but must be consolidated.




For each kilometre of the surveyed route, both surface material and quality were noted by the route inspectors.

## SURFACE QUALITY



Most of the route runs on perfectly (63%) or well rideable (29%) surface. 7% were classified as moderately rideable, and therefore still acceptable for experienced users of touring bikes in most weather conditions but challenging for less experienced users, those with special needs, or in specific very dry or wet weather. The focus in action planning was placed on sections that are badly rideable (1.3%) or not rideable at all (0.3%). However, these shares are relatively low. The highest share of these sections was identified in Andalusia (4%).

	SURFACE					
	Perfectly rideable	Well rideable	Moderately rideable	Badly rideable	Not rideable	Insufficient width
Andalusia	73%	18%	5%	3%	1%	6%
Valencia	55%	25%	17%	2%	0%	15%
Cataluña	57%	33%	8%	1%	1%	5%
Alpes-Maritimes	86%	11%	3%	0%	0%	3%
Mantova	81%	8%	11%	0%	1%	1%
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	39%	47%	12%	2%	0%	4%
Slovenia	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%
Croatia	85%	11%	3%	1%	0%	1%
Western Greece	12%	88%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Cyprus	17%	76%	7%	0%	0%	6%

 = Does not meet essential criteria     = Does not meet important criteria     = Does not meet additional criteria



*Not rideable / sandy stretch on daily section 13: Almeria - San José, Cabo de Gata, in Andalusia.*



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## 5.4 Gradients

It is much harder to ascend vertically or to go uphill than to cycle on flat sections. The cumulative elevation gain or loss on any daily section should not exceed 1000 m, and on most sections, it should not exceed 500 m. There should be no slopes that are too steep to ride for the target groups.

The Mediterranean coast is a mountainous area and there are a lot of climbs and downhill on the route (with the exception of Mantua Province, where EuroVelo 8 follows the river Po). For example, on the 1,123 km of Croatian route, one needs to ascend more than 10,000 meters, with four daily sections with around 1,000 m in ascent and another six daily sections with more than 500 m in ascent. Some of these steeper stretches help to avoid busy roads with high traffic and many benefit from beautiful views.

While it is not always possible to avoid ups and downs, this can be compensated with adequate service density. This allows cyclists to divide the route into shorter daily sections, permitting a wider range of users to cycle along the route.

## 5.5 Attractiveness

EuroVelo routes should offer a pleasant and interesting cycling experience. They should lead through attractive landscapes, connect important cultural and natural attractions, provide satisfactory social safety and not be exposed to nuisances such as excessive noise.



*Antirrio Castle, a cultural highlight along the route in Western Greece*

42.3% of the route were classified as highly attractive areas and another 52.7% as attractive. Only 5% of the route were considered monotonous or unattractive. Moreover, almost 700 cultural or natural attractions were registered by the route inspectors, while there are 23 UNESCO World Heritage sites along EuroVelo 8.

Environmental nuisances (noise, dust or unpleasant smell) were encountered on 11.9% of the route. Especially the route inspectors in Catalonia have registered this.

## 5.6 Signing

EuroVelo routes should be signed in line with national standards (if they exist) and EuroVelo guidelines (obligatory). No signs should be missing at major crossings or turning points. Ideally, there should be regular confirmation and distance signs.



*EuroVelo 8 sign in Friuli Venezia Giulia, Italy*

The route tends to be well signed according to the national/regional standards in Catalonia, France AM, Mantua, Slovenia, Western Greece, and parts of FVG, Croatia and Andalusia. 43 daily sections have signs in line with the national/regional standard. There is a lack of signing in Cyprus, and signs were encountered much less frequently in certain parts of Andalusia and Croatia. Only seven daily sections carry EuroVelo signs, with five of them also carrying

national/regional signs. France AM, Mantua, Andalusia and FVG have the most EuroVelo signs, while there are no EuroVelo signs in most of the other regions/countries. There were 38 daily sections without any signing.

The varying levels of coverage with signs often reflect varying levels of route development. However, there are also cases where a lack of signage is related to a lack of a relevant national legal framework (no legal basis for putting up the signs on public roads, no defined standards/regulations etc.). This was the case for Croatia, for instance, at the time of the data collection. But new regulation is already underway in Croatia.

## 5.7 Public transport

It should be possible to access the route by public transport carrying bicycles. The route survey included an assessment of:

- how often it is possible to transport bikes in terms of distance,
- how many connections are available in different locations,
- what is their capacity in terms of the number of bicycles that can be transported,
- what kinds of bicycles can be transported (e.g. tandems, hand bikes, trailers...)?

As it might be difficult to carry a touring bicycle with luggage up or down the stairs, the accessibility of public transport stops and stations was also considered (e.g. whether a platform on a train station is accessible only by stairs or also by ramps or lifts).

Accessibility of the route with public transport varies significantly between countries. For instance:

- In Spain, assembled bicycles are accepted on regional and medium distance trains, but limits apply. There is no possibility to transport bicycles on long-distance or high-speed trains.
- In France, assembled bicycles are generally accepted without a charge on regional (TER) trains.



*Bike compartment in a train in Friuli Venezia Giulia, Italy*

There are some limited possibilities of transporting assembled bicycles on long-distance connections.

- In Italy, assembled bicycles are accepted on regional trains, but limits apply. There is no possibility to transport bicycles on national long-distance or high-speed trains. Some international connections to Italy allow bike transport.
- In Croatia, train connections offering bike transport are severely limited. For instance, there is only one train per day with a bicycle carriage possibility between Zagreb and Split.

For information about bus or ship/ferry services, please refer to the national/regional reports. There are many sea and island ferry and ship connections in the Mediterranean, and visiting islands close to EuroVelo 8 can be an exciting experience for cycle tourists. For instance, Italian tourists can access EuroVelo 8 in Croatia by several ship connections.

In several countries in the Mediterranean region, bicycle tourism is only starting to develop, and public transport companies have not yet defined clear policies towards transporting bicycles on trains or busses. The possibility to carry the bike can depend on the willingness of the bus driver or train conductor, which does not offer a desirable level of public transport reliability.



## 5.8 Critical deficiencies

Weaknesses along the route are considered critical in this report if the route does not meet the essential or important criteria in these occasions. The following critical deficiencies were identified during the route survey:

- 131 km with very high traffic and 259 km with high traffic. For instance, nearly half of the route in France's Alpes-Maritimes region (50 out of 103 km) leads along busy coastal routes with high or very high traffic. The highest traffic volumes are encountered between Villefranche-sur-Mer and Menton.
- 52 km of badly rideable and 13 km of not-rideable surface.
- Legal disruptions of the route prevent cyclists from continuing on their path. Seven of these kilometres were identified on the route. For instance, the boat bridge on the Oglio river in the province of Mantua (Italy) was closed both during the high and low water level periods of the river when the survey was done in July 2017. However, this problem has already been solved as a consequence of the MEDCYCLETOUR project: It was identified in the survey and covered by the Action Plan. Following a structural intervention and the implementation of a maintenance plan, the bridge has become accessible by pedestrians and cyclists all year.
- A total of 11 sets of stairs that were difficult to surmount were encountered during the route survey, most of them in Valencia and Catalonia, while there were 41 sets of stairs in total that were classified as easy to surmount.
- 36 chicanes with less than 1.3 m clearance.
- 59 very dangerous and 270 dangerous crossings.
- Several sections with an elevation gain of more than 1,000 m and many more with an elevation gain of 500-1,000 m.
- There were 38 daily sections without any signing.

## 6 Services

Cyclists will find a quite excellent range of services along EuroVelo 8 – Mediterranean Route, reflecting the fact that it is a popular tourism destination generally.

Accommodation and food can be easily found in all of the surveyed regions. There is not a single daily section that does not offer food at least once. On many daily sections, there are 20-30 minor sections with food. Thanks to the proximity to the beach, there is also plenty of accommodation. All the daily sections meet the essential criteria (at least basic or average





standard accommodation), and almost all daily sections (except for one) also meet the important criteria (not just very basic accommodation).

However, the availability of cycle-friendly accommodation could be improved. Only 10 out of 83 daily sections offer this service.

Similarly, there is a good range of bike services on most of the daily sections. There are only 10 out of 83 daily sections that do not offer any form of bike-repair services. The availability of such services is an essential criterion in the ECS. E-bike charging stations are still quite rare. There were only 10 along the entire surveyed route.

Based on the survey data, the following services exist along the route:

Daily section	Accommodation					Food/ rest areas		Bike services				
	luxury	standard	budget	camping	cyclist-friendly	food on daily section	food/rest every 15 km	repair shops	self-service	spare parts	e-bike charging	Helpline
1	8	13	13	7	1	27	Yes	6	5	6	0	0
2	1	12	15	12	0	15	Yes	3	0	2	0	0
3	0	2	1	0	1	5	No	1	1	1	0	0
4	16	10	3	0	0	25	Yes	2	2	4	1	0
5	15	27	4	1	0	28	Yes	14	0	12	0	1
6	7	29	22	3	0	32	Yes	5	1	4	0	1
7	6	24	20	0	0	25	Yes	8	3	4	1	2
8	1	9	8	0	0	23	Yes	2	0	3	0	0
9	5	16	16	2	0	20	No	2	0	0	0	0
10	4	12	7	4	1	21	Yes	3	3	3	0	0
11	0	4	2	2	0	13	Yes	3	3	3	1	0
12	1	17	17	5	0	32	Yes	4	0	4	0	0
13	4	5	5	2	0	15	Yes	0	0	0	0	0
14	7	8	12	4	0	15	Yes	2	2	2	0	0
15	9	21	23	3	2	25	Yes	6	0	6	0	0
16	0	1	0	0	0	6	Yes	2	2	2	0	0
29	0	4	5	1	0	6	No	1	0	2	0	0
30	10	15	10	4	0	15	Yes	4	0	0	0	1
31	0	3	0	0	0	7	Yes	2	0	0	0	0
32	0	2	1	0	0	10	No	3	0	3	0	0



Daily section	Accommodation					Food/ rest areas		Bike services				
	luxury	standard	budget	camping	cyclist-friendly	food on daily section	food/rest every 15 km	repair shops	self-service	spare parts	e-bike charging	Helpline
33	0	0	1	0	0	8	Yes	0	0	0	0	0
34	2	4	7	0	0	8	No	3	0	0	0	0
35	0	3	2	0	0	5	No	3	0	2	0	0
36	3	17	10	4	0	24	Yes	5	0	0	0	0
37	2	11	8	8	0	20	Yes	1	0	1	1	0
38	2	6	5	3	0	13	No	2	0	2	0	0
41	1	5	0	2	0	12	No	2	0	0	0	0
42	9	19	19	15	0	25	Yes	17	0	0	0	0
43	2	5	3	0	0	4	No	4	0	0	0	0
44	9	11	11	3	0	13	Yes	11	0	0	0	0
45	19	19	18	0	0	19	Yes	19	0	0	0	0
46	5	11	9	7	0	11	No	10	0	0	0	0
47	4	8	6	0	0	9	No	8	0	0	0	0
48	5	10	7	9	0	13	No	5	0	0	0	0
49	18	21	17	20	0	24	Yes	16	0	0	0	0
50	2	6	5	7	0	5	No	6	0	0	0	0
51	0	1	0	0	0	2	No	1	0	0	0	0
70	4	3	4	4	0	18	Yes	0	0	0	0	0
71	4	15	13	3	0	29	Yes	9	0	0	1	0
72	16	15	4	0	0	25	Yes	5	1	0	0	0
81	0	7	2	0	4	20	Yes	1	0	0	0	0
82	0	9	3	0	1	17	Yes	1	0	0	0	0
83	0	9	0	0	1	22	Yes	3	0	0	0	0
84	0	7	1	0	2	26	Yes	3	1	0	0	0
89	7	7	0	6	0	9	Yes	5	0	0	0	0
90	7	21	0	8	0	24	Yes	7	0	0	0	0
91	3	15	2	4	1	27	Yes	6	0	1	0	0
92	7	22	1	8	0	21	Yes	3	0	1	0	0
93	6	29	8	4	0	39	Yes	15	0	10	0	0
94	11	14	11	0	2	15	Yes	10	0	10	0	0
95	4	9	5	4	0	20	Yes	3	0	2	0	0
97	8	7	10	8	0	27	Yes	4	0	3	2	0
98	3	9	7	4	1	14	No	3	0	3	0	0
99	1	19	15	1	0	17	No	3	0	4	1	0
100	11	20	14	3	0	23	Yes	1	0	1	0	0



Daily section	Accommodation					Food/ rest areas		Bike services				
	luxury	standard	budget	camping	cyclist-friendly	food on daily section	food/rest every 15 km	repair shops	self-service	spare parts	e-bike charging	Helpline
101	1	6	6	1	0	13	No	0	0	0	0	0
102	0	5	0	0	0	4	No	1	0	0	0	0
103	0	2	1	0	0	5	No	1	0	1	0	0
104	0	2	2	0	0	6	No	1	0	1	0	0
105	0	2	1	0	0	1	No	0	0	0	0	0
106	0	3	3	0	0	4	No	0	0	0	0	0
107	13	16	15	13	1	20	No	3	1	3	1	0
108	2	7	5	3	0	8	Yes	1	0	1	0	0
109	1	7	5	7	0	7	Yes	2	0	2	1	0
110	1	7	4	3	0	14	Yes	0	0	0	0	0
111	0	4	3	1	0	5	Yes	1	0	1	0	0
112	4	8	6	5	0	20	Yes	2	0	2	0	0
113	5	9	8	7	0	10	Yes	0	0	0	0	0
114	0	4	3	1	0	6	No	0	0	0	0	0
115	3	7	5	3	0	10	No	1	0	1	0	0
116	1	10	9	3	0	15	No	0	0	0	0	0
138	0	4	2	0	0	14	Yes	9	0	4	0	0
139	0	4	2	0	0	9	Yes	5	0	1	0	0
140	0	5	4	0	0	6	No	6	0	0	0	0
141	0	2	3	1	1	3	No	2	0	0	0	0
142	0	2	1	0	0	9	No	8	0	0	0	0
143	0	1	1	0	0	13	Yes	9	0	0	0	0
144	0	5	1	2	0	20	Yes	8	0	1	0	0
145	1	9	5	0	0	13	Yes	11	0	7	0	0
154	40	61	0	0	0	61	Yes	4	0	4	0	0
155	10	63	53	0	0	63	Yes	3	0	3	0	0
156	14	34	20	0	0	34	Yes	4	0	4	0	0
157	26	32	47	0	0	73	Yes	3	0	3	0	0

= Does not meet essential criteria    
  = Does not meet important criteria    
  = Does not meet additional criteria



*Bike repair station, Makarska Riviera, Croatia*

## 7 Promotion

The route is generally well equipped with promotional material that cycle tourists can find on their path. 176 tourist information centres (with staff) and 532 tourist information panels or boards were identified along the surveyed route. However, there were 14 daily sections with neither a tourist information centre nor a panel or board, most of them in Andalusia and Western Greece.




### Tourist information centres / panels per section\*

Daily section	Info centre	Info panel		Daily section	Info centre	Info panel
1	1	3		83	0	9
2	2	3		84	0	9
3	0	1		89	1	0
4	0	0		90	1	0
5	1	17		91	2	3
6	0	12		92	2	2
7	0	17		93	3	1
8	1	17		94	2	0
9	0	0		95	2	20
10	0	0		97	5	15
11	0	0		98	2	8
12	0	0		99	0	2
13	0	1		100	4	10



Daily section	Info centre	Info panel		Daily section	Info centre	Info panel
14	1	0		101	3	1
15	1	0		102	1	2
16	0	0		103	1	0
29	0	6		104	1	1
30	0	0		105	0	0
31	0	2		106	3	0
32	0	6		107	5	10
33	0	12		108	4	3
34	1	5		109	4	1
35	0	1		110	3	3
36	2	9		111	3	3
37	0	10		112	4	7
38	0	7		113	3	4
41	2	8		114	1	1
42	3	7		115	3	1
43	2	2		116	2	6
44	0	1		138	0	0
45	4	3		139	0	1
46	6	6		140	0	0
47	5	6		141	0	0
48	3	3		142	0	1
49	11	4		143	0	0
50	7	5		144	0	0
51	1	1		145	0	0
70	0	6		154	31	25
71	0	12		155	0	61
72	2	20		156	10	33
81	0	11		157	14	61
82	0	4				

\*Based on the route survey.

 = Does not meet essential criteria  
  = Does not meet important criteria  
  = Does not meet additional criteria



*Information boards in Slovenia*

## 8 Conclusions

The surveyed route cannot be certified yet according to the European Certification Standard, a set of cycle-route standards developed by the ECF, as it does not meet the essential criteria on 100% of its length. At the time of the survey, it met these criteria on 94.8% of its length in terms of continuity, route components (road safety), surface and attractiveness.

- But more than 40 daily sections already meet all the Essential criteria, and 30 daily sections also meet the Important criteria on at least 70% of their length. 53 sections need improvements in this aspect.
- With 3,899 km, the surveyed parts of the route cover about 66% of the EuroVelo 8 cycle route's estimated total length of 5,900 km.
- The recurring critical issue is high or very high traffic on busy coastal roads. In addition, more than 300 dangerous or very dangerous crossings were identified by the route inspectors.
- Only 65 km of the surveyed route do not meet the minimum quality requirements for surface.
- The route includes also 52 stairs, distributed between 19 daily sections.
- The route includes nearly 200 km where the width is not sufficient.
- There were 38 sections without any signing.



- The critical sections with the lowest level of conformance with the European Certification Standard are the daily sections 6 (Marbella - Fuengirola) and 13 (Almeria - San José, Cabo de Gata) in Andalusia, as well as daily section 72 in France (Nice - Menton).
- Significant investments in route infrastructure are already planned in Andalusia, partially resolving the critical problems.
- Accessibility of the route with public transport varies significantly between countries.
- Many daily sections are quite hilly.
- Cyclists will find a quite excellent range of services along EuroVelo 8 – Mediterranean Route, especially in terms of food and accommodation. The availability of cycle-friendly accommodation and of e-bike charging stations could be improved.
- There were 14 daily sections with neither a tourist information centre nor a panel or board.

One should note that the results of the survey at the regional and national level were affected by the approach taken in defining the route itinerary in various countries and regions. For example, the Croatian partners decided to focus on connecting already well and safely rideable local roads to create an acceptable continuous route as quickly as possible. By contrast, the French Département Alpes-Maritimes aimed for a more ambitious itinerary leading through the busiest resorts along the coasts, which will be more difficult to implement but may also bring higher benefits (more users, potential for shift from motorised traffic also for daily commuters).

## 9 Acknowledgements

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## 10 Annex

### Traffic categories methodology

Traffic is categorised as a function of the volume of cars and speed. During the survey, the route inspectors have counted traffic units.

When **cycling in mixed traffic** (on a public road, bicycle street, agricultural/forest/water management road), the following table was used to determine the traffic category:

Cycling in mixed traffic	30 km/h or lower	31 to 50 km/h	51 to 79 km/h	80 km/h or over
1-500 units/day	very low	very low	very low	low
501-2.000 units/day	very low	low	low	moderate
2.001-4.000 units/day	low	moderate	moderate	high
4.001-10.000 units/day	moderate	high	high	very high
>10.000 units/day	moderate	very high	very high	very high

For **cycle lanes painted on the carriageway or asphalted shoulders**, the following table was used:

Cycling on cycle lanes	30 km/h or lower	31 to 50 km/h	51 to 79 km/h	80 km/h or over
<b>Minimum width / direction</b>	1.5 m	1.5 m	2.0 m	2.0 m
1-500 units/day	very low	very low	very low	low
501-2.000 units/day	very low	very low	low	low
2.001-4.000 units/day	very low	very low	low	moderate
4.001-10.000 units/day	very low	low	moderate	high
>10.000 units/day	low	moderate	high	very high





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If the cycle lane width is lower than the specified minimum, the lane does not guarantee a safe distance from overtaking cars and therefore the table for mixed traffic is used instead.

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**EuroVelo 8**  
Mediterranean Route

