# Cycling Tourism Trends 2026 – and EuroVelo governance



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**15/10/2026**
**EuroVelo 1 in Portugal meeting**

Agathe Daudibon
EuroVelo and cycling tourism Director,
European Cyclists' Federation

ECF gratefully acknowledges financial support from the LIFE Programme of the European Union

EuroVelo.com

# ECF's expertise on cycling tourism

- Transnational coordinator of **EuroVelo**, the European Cycle Route Network, both a **transport** and **tourism** network since 1997
- Co-organiser of the **EuroVelo & Cycling Tourism Conference**: next edition 29/09-01/10 in Trieste, FVG
- **Advocate** for more cycling tourism in Europe and beyond
- Expert on cycling tourism **knowledge** and **data**
- **Partner** of large organisations: European Commission, UNECE, Council of Europe, GSTC, etc.




The EuroVelo 3 extension to Fisterra in Spain has plenty of scenic spots approaching the Atlantic Ocean. Photo by Kike Abelleira

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# EuroVelo 1

- 11,200 km in 2026
- 6 countries
- 77% fully developed

*(11% EuroVelo Certified, 52% Developed with EuroVelo signs, 14% Developed without EuroVelo signs, 4% Partially Developed with EuroVelo signs, 19% Partially developed without EuroVelo signs)*




EuroVelo 1 in 2026 ©EuroVelo-ECF

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# What is EuroVelo?

- Initiative coordinated by the European Cyclists' Federation (ECF), the voice of civil society on cycling in Europe
- Created in 1997, EuroVelo will turn **29 years old** (21 November 2026)!
- **17** routes in **39** countries
- **90,000+** km of cycle routes
- **63,000+** km of developed routes (69%) - **38,000+** km signed with EuroVelo signs (42%)
- **A backbone for national cycle route networks**
- **Transport** and **tourism** network

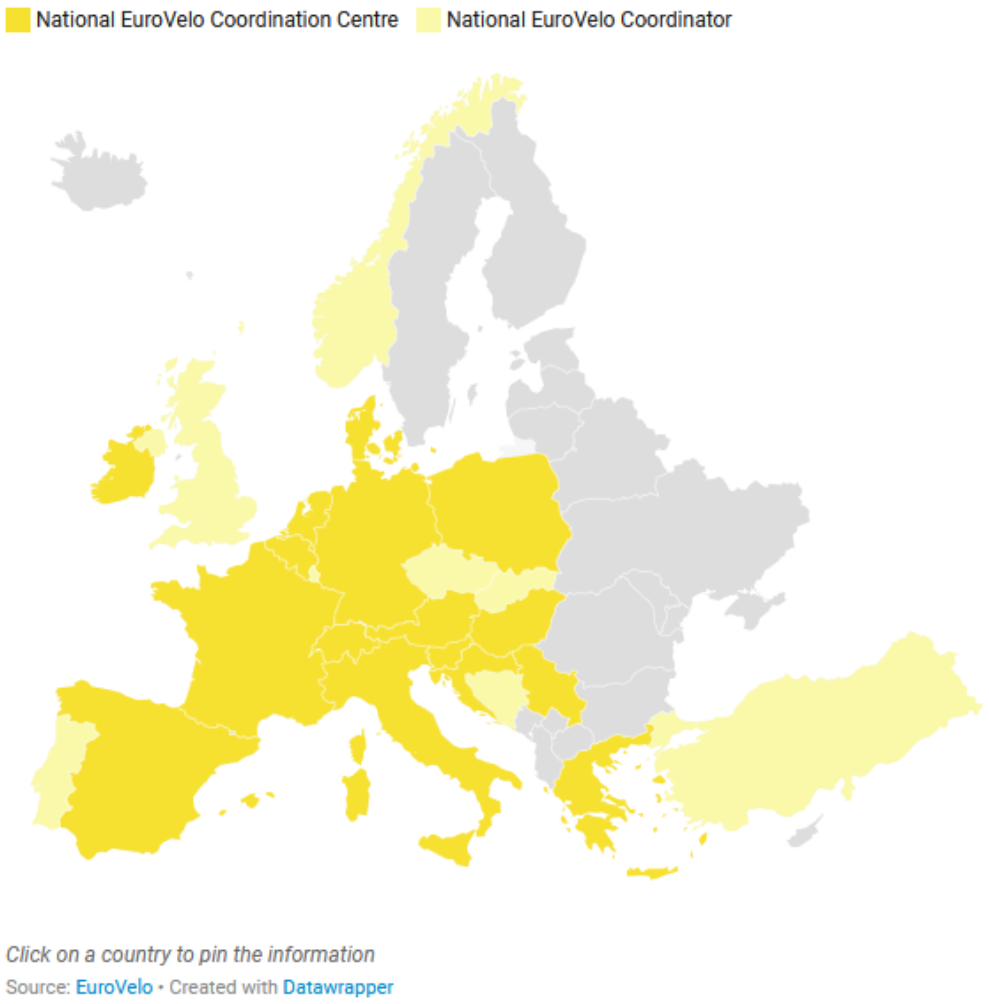



EuroVelo, the European cycle route network (2026)

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# EuroVelo governance

- National Coordinator in Portugal: Federação Portuguesa Cicloturismo e Utilizadores de Bicicleta (FPCUB) since 2011
- ECF's responsibility is limited to the European coordination
- NECC's responsibility is limited to the national coordination
- The NECC must follow the EuroVelo standards and guidelines in their work
- Their used to be a transnational EuroVelo 1 Partnership since 2025 – and former EU project AtlanticOnBike



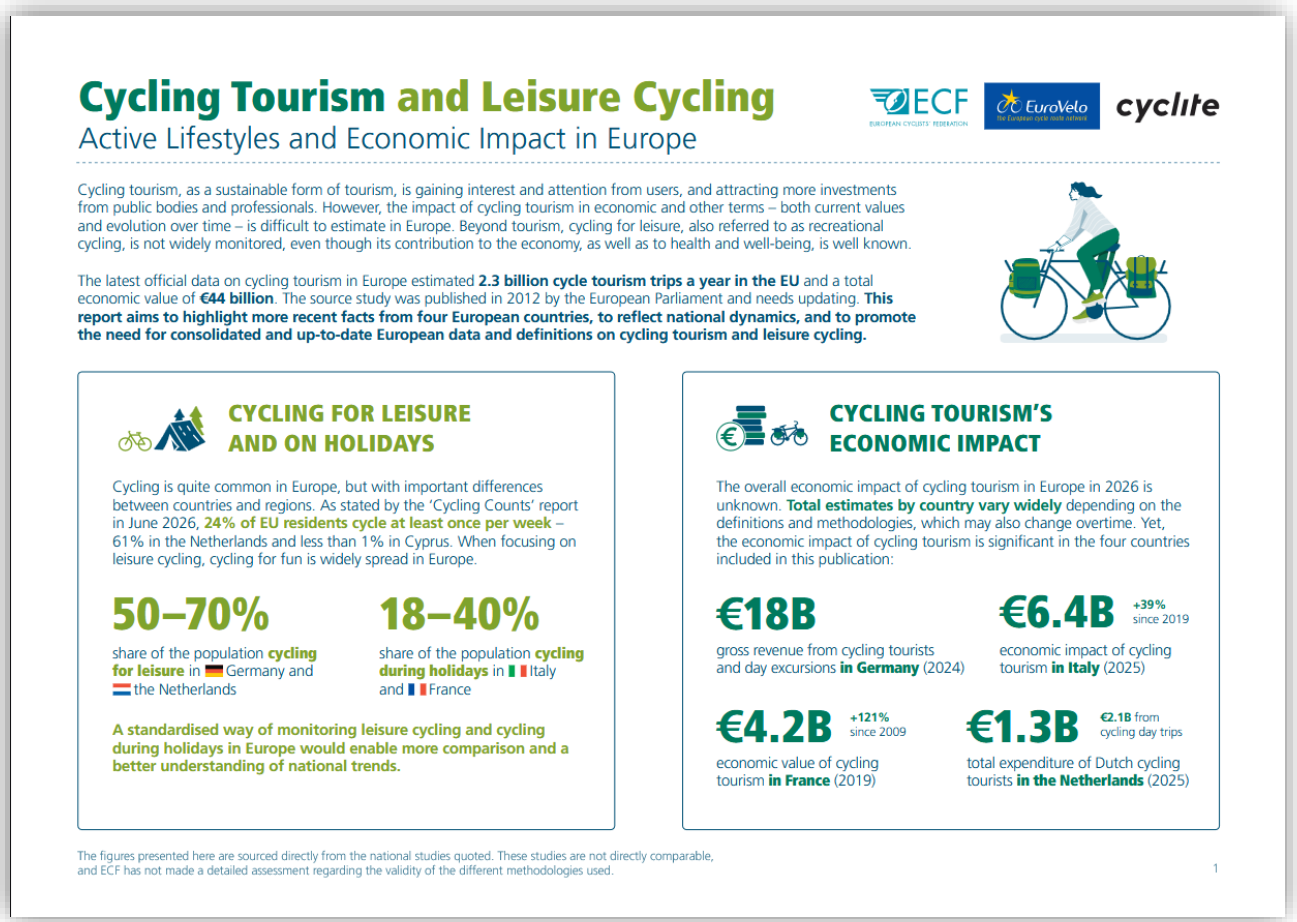

National EuroVelo Coordination Centres in 2026

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## Cycling Tourism Trends 2026 and EuroVelo governance

# EuroVelo Data Hub

- EuroVelo Usage Barometer
- EuroVelo Route Development Status Report
- EuroVelo Digital Statistics Report
- State of the Cycling Tour Operators Industry
- Danube Cycling Tourists Survey
- Latest report: **Cycling tourism and leisure cycling**



### Cycling Tourism and Leisure Cycling

Active Lifestyles and Economic Impact in Europe

Cycling tourism, as a sustainable form of tourism, is gaining interest and attention from users, and attracting more investments from public bodies and professionals. However, the impact of cycling tourism in economic and other terms – both current values and evolution over time – is difficult to estimate in Europe. Beyond tourism, cycling for leisure, also referred to as recreational cycling, is not widely monitored, even though its contribution to the economy, as well as to health and well-being, is well known.

The latest official data on cycling tourism in Europe estimated **2.3 billion cycle tourism trips a year in the EU** and a total economic value of **€44 billion**. The source study was published in 2012 by the European Parliament and needs updating. **This report aims to highlight more recent facts from four European countries, to reflect national dynamics, and to promote the need for consolidated and up-to-date European data and definitions on cycling tourism and leisure cycling.**

**CYCLING FOR LEISURE AND ON HOLIDAYS**

Cycling is quite common in Europe, but with important differences between countries and regions. As stated by the 'Cycling Counts' report in June 2026, **24% of EU residents cycle at least once per week** – 61% in the Netherlands and less than 1% in Cyprus. When focusing on leisure cycling, cycling for fun is widely spread in Europe.

**50–70%** share of the population **cycling for leisure** in Germany and the Netherlands

**18–40%** share of the population **cycling during holidays** in Italy and France

**A standardised way of monitoring leisure cycling and cycling during holidays in Europe would enable more comparison and a better understanding of national trends.**

**CYCLING TOURISM'S ECONOMIC IMPACT**

The overall economic impact of cycling tourism in Europe in 2026 is unknown. **Total estimates by country vary widely** depending on the definitions and methodologies, which may also change overtime. Yet, the economic impact of cycling tourism is significant in the four countries included in this publication:

**€18B** gross revenue from cycling tourists and day excursions **in Germany** (2024)

**€6.4B** +39% since 2019 economic impact of cycling tourism **in Italy** (2025)

**€4.2B** +121% since 2009 economic value of cycling tourism **in France** (2019)

**€1.3B** €2.1B from cycling day trips total expenditure of Dutch cycling tourists **in the Netherlands** (2025)

The figures presented here are sourced directly from the national studies quoted. These studies are not directly comparable, and ECF has not made a detailed assessment regarding the validity of the different methodologies used.

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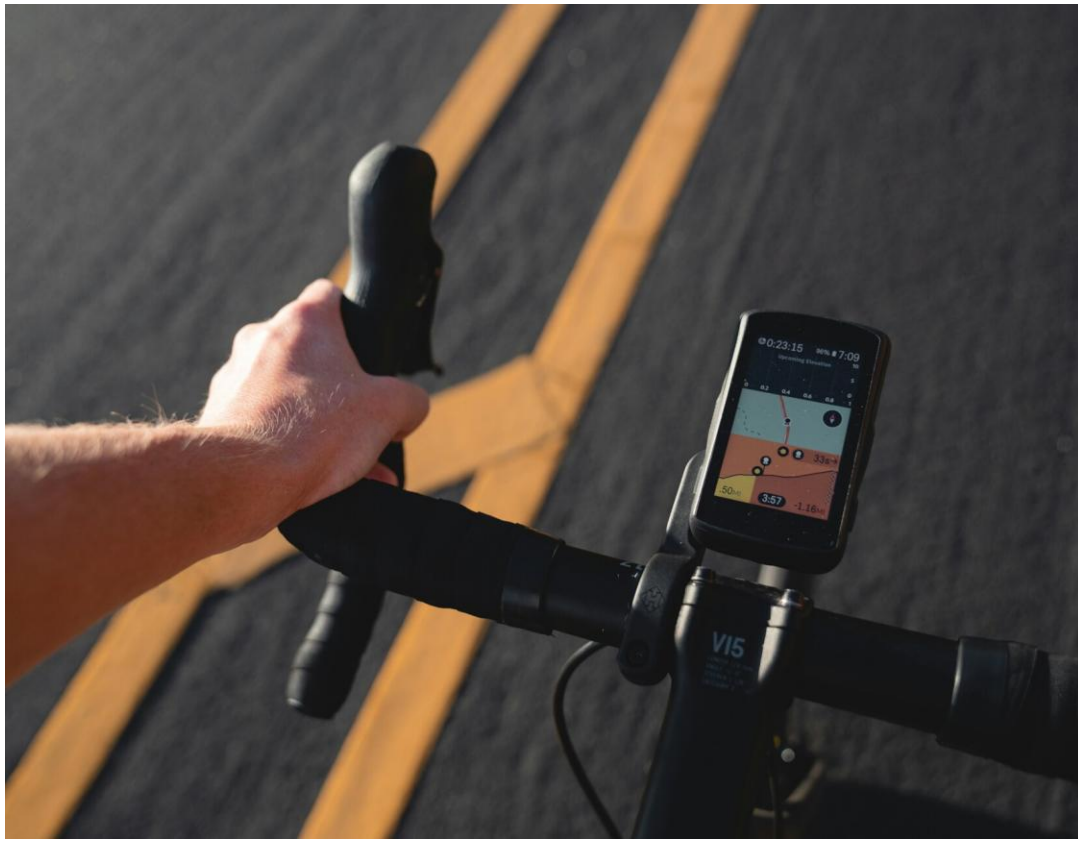
# #1 AI and digital innovations

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# AI and digital innovations

- **High impact** of AI on tourism in general - fast changing context **(!)** Anticipate drops in web traffic **(!)**
- **Opportunities** of AI for cycling tourism: remove practical barriers, ease planning and tailoring, opportunity to better answer the users need (GEO-GAIO+SEO)
- **Challenges** of AI for cycling tourism: quality of source data and content, availability of services matching demand, trust (consumer protection, environmental impact, sovereignty

=> **Need to acknowledge the change and adapt** content and data. GPX and maps are less impacted by LLM



Will Truettner on Unsplash

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# #2 Personalised cycling tourism experiences

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# Personalised cycling tourism experiences

- **More diverse user base**: e-bikes, gravel, bike-packer, new-comers, urban cycling tourists…
- **A call to develop more diverse offers** with adapted infrastructure, services, information, story-telling, etc
- **Cycling tourism is not a niche anymore**: need to adopt a broader approach to cycling (from sport to transport, adventure to relaxation, luxury to affordable holidays)



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# #3 Untapping potential in the cycling tourism industry

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# Potential for innovations and coordination

- Cycling tourism represents **€44B/year** economic impact in Europe (back in 2012) – about **30% of the cycling industry**
- In Austria, **x3** economic impact from cycling tourism from 2009 and 2022 - **+263%** for La Loire à Vélo – EuroVelo 6 from 2010 to 2022
- Cooperation with well-known **brands**: using the existing assets and communication channels
- Creation of **industry clusters** for innovation
- **Public-private partnerships**, especially for visibility and promotion
- **Closer cooperation** between advocates and business developers (ex: **Active Tourism Coalition**)



© EuroVelo 6 - La Loire à Vélo in Saumur – Bertrand Rieger

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# #4 Multi-purpose cycle route networks

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# Multi-purpose cycle route networks

- EuroVelo covers **90% of Europe's NUTS 1 regions**.
- **166M Europeans** live **within 5 km** of a **EuroVelo route** – 21% within 2 km (112M) – 41% within 10 km (221M)
- Touristic cycle routes may be used for daily mobility and leisure
- Cycle highways may be used for recreation
- **Well-planned, built and maintained cycle route networks are needed and deserve international recognition**




EuroVelo, the European cycle route network (2026)

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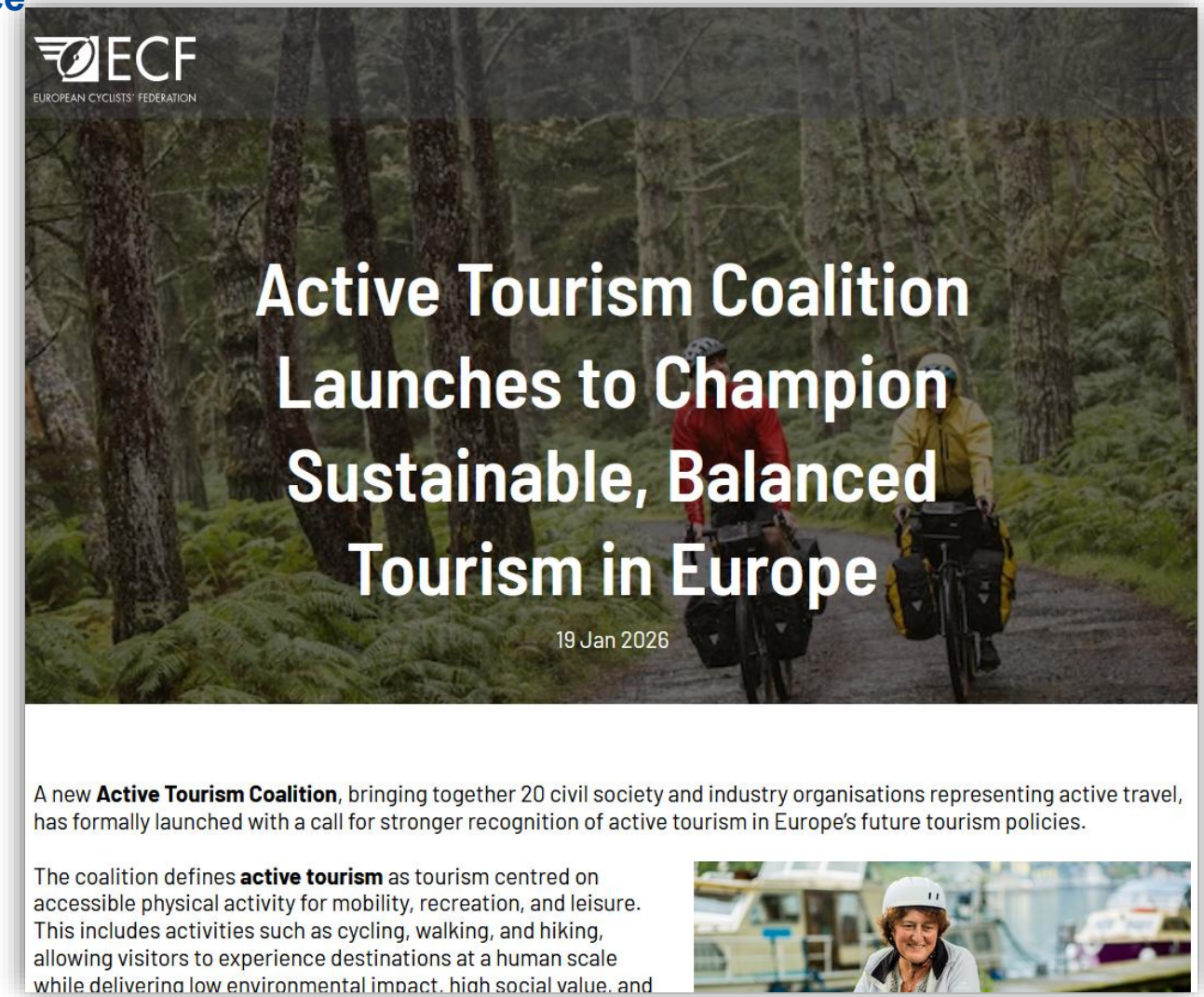
# #5 Political recognition, strategies and financial support

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# ECF is leading the **Active Tourism Coalition**

Cycling, walking, hiking, etc: all together

Calling for recognition in the EU Sustainable Tourism Strategy.




EuroVelo the European cycle route network
ECF EUROPEAN CYCLISTS' FEDERATION
Life
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## Conclusion

# Let’s keep in touch

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Join the EuroVelo & Cycling Tourism Conference 2027 **29/09-01/10 in Trieste, Friuli-Venezia Giulia**.

Main contact: eurovelo@ecf.com




EuroVelo & Cycling Tourism Conference 2025 – Balatonfüred, Hungary

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# Thank you!

## Do you have any questions?

a.daudibon@ecf.com

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