



# Annual Report 2023



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



ECF gratefully acknowledges financial support from the cycling industry via Cycling Industries Europe

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We are  
dedicated  
to achieving  
more and  
better **cycling**  
**for all** in  
Europe.





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# Introduction from our President

## ECF's impact in 2023 on more and better cycling cannot be overstated.

Backed by our members and networks, in 2023 ECF ensured cycling was put higher on the political agenda than ever before, achieving major breakthroughs that will benefit cyclists in Europe and beyond now and for many years to come.

Top of our list is finally achieving an international strategic roadmap for cycling, in the form of the ***European Cycling Declaration***, a “strategic compass for existing and future policies to unleash the full potential of cycling in the European Union”. It is ambitious and historic and will make its impact felt far beyond the EU's borders. ECF's contribution to all the steps along the way cannot be understated, be it in terms of expert input, sustained lobbying efforts, collaboration with industry or mobilising our members and other stakeholders.

Other outcomes where our advocacy was decisive include first ever EU legislation on minimum bicycle parking standards and ensuring that the future Social Climate Fund will be used for cycling investments to alleviate transport poverty.

Working with our members and networks, we helped catalyse the development of more national cycling strategies and more investments and cycling-friendly policies of all kinds throughout Europe. Unfortunately we have also seen instances of the roll-back of pro-cycling policies (aka “bikelash”), which shows we cannot be complacent.

Beyond Europe, our presence and influence increased, with innovative new research and a global campaign at COP28 that has elevated the role of more cycling in addressing climate change.

More people are choosing cycling tourism. The EuroVelo cycle route network coordinated by ECF continued to grow both in range and in use. We brought the EuroVelo and cycling tourism community together for a very successful conference in Izmir.

Our Velo-city conference attracted over 1,500 Velo-citizens and was a finalist in the ICCA & Best Cities Global Alliance awards for creating lasting impact in the host city of Leipzig.

As the political winds have been turning colder, ECF has become more resilient. Our strategy continues to prioritise activities and initiatives that have the greatest impact. Prudent and conservative financial management and further diversification of our income have ensured we could once again deliver a net positive result in 2023.

None of the above would have been possible without the efforts of our tireless CEO Jill Warren and ECF’s passionate and dedicated staff. On behalf of the board, I want to extend a big thank you. Their efforts, hand in hand with our members, board and wider stakeholders, have been critical to these tremendous achievements.

On behalf of the ECF board,



**Henk Swarttouw**  
ECF President

# 1 Advocacy: Cycling elevated to strategic priority in Europe

2023 was a year of unprecedented advocacy successes in Europe, with the EU institutions heeding our longstanding call for a more strategic, holistic and joined-up approach to cycling.

## IN A NUTSHELL



**€3.21 billion**

Figure set to be invested in cycling projects across Europe in the present 2021-2027 EU structural funding period



**EU declaration**

European Commission proposes a “strategic compass” with eight guiding principles and 36 concrete commitments to enable more and better cycling



**14 (+7)**

Number of European countries with cycling or similar strategies now in place



**460,000+ km**

of cycling infrastructure analysed and mapped across Europe in ECF's QECIO 2.0



**400+**

Non-profits joined PATH's call at COP28 to enable more people to walk and cycle safely to decarbonise transport and improve people's lives

## Major progress on delivering our strategic aims

2023 will be remembered as a monumental year for the advancement of cycling in Europe. For the first time ever, cycling was declared a strategic priority in the EU, with the European Parliament passing a Resolution on developing an EU cycling strategy, a majority of Member States signing on to a declaration calling for a strategic approach, and the European Commission proposing a historic European Declaration on Cycling.

This momentous progress is the result of many years of advocacy engagement by ECF, and strong cooperation with our cycling industry partners, our members and networks.

Our advocacy unlocked a new source of funding to make cycling more affordable and accessible, in the form of the €87 billion Social Climate Fund.

ECF's advocacy also helped secure new rules that will ensure minimum bicycle parking standards for all types of buildings in the EU, and more possibilities for future cycling investments in an improved TEN-T, the EU's flagship transport policy.

On the global stage at events such as the COP28 in Dubai, ECF made the case for the essential role cycling can and must play in decarbonising transport, backed by pioneering new research and analysis.

We launched and improved new data driven tools to assess the quality and quantity of cycling infrastructure and to assess the cargo bike friendliness of cities – both of which support and empower our advocacy community in their work.

These and other advocacy milestones will enable more people to cycle more safely and unleash the many benefits of cycling for society and the economy. ECF is proud to have made such a decisive contribution to unlocking more and better cycling for all in 2023. ●

## From a Resolution to a Declaration

On 16 February 2023, the European Parliament adopted a first-ever "Resolution on developing an EU Cycling Strategy" by an overwhelming majority. This ambitious parliamentary resolution, led by MEP and Chair of the TRAN Committee Karima Delli, called on the European Commission to develop a European cycling strategy with an aim of doubling the number of kilometres cycled in Europe by 2030. Many other longstanding policy aims were included as recommendations in the text, including the recognition of cycling as a fully fledged mode of transport, more funding for cycling infrastructure, fiscal measures to make cycling more affordable, and better bike parking and e-charging facilities.

Testament to our work and cooperation that led to this major breakthrough, at Velo-city Leipzig in May 2023, ECF's CEO Jill Warren and Cycling industries Europe's CEO Kevin Mayne were jointly recognised with the Cycling Embassy of Denmark's Leadership Award for Cycling Promotion 2023.

The next major breakthrough for cycling in 2023 came in October at the EU Urban Mobility Days event in Seville, when Transport Commissioner Adina Vălean unveiled the Commission's proposal for a European Declaration on Cycling. Guided by eight principles and 36 commitments to enable more and better cycling, the inter-institutional Declaration aims to serve as a "strategic compass for existing and future policies" to unleash the full potential of cycling in the European Union."



ECF Board Member Sir Graham Watson and CEO Jill Warren meet with EU Transport Commissioner Adina Vălean in July 2023



Jill Warren (CEO, ECF) and Kevin Mayne (CEO, Cycling Industries Europe) were recipients of the Cycling Embassy of Denmark's Leadership Award for Cycling Promotion 2023

ECF and its cycling industry partners enthusiastically welcomed the Declaration as a key milestone and the Commission's most ambitious initiative on cycling to date. It elevates cycling to a strategic priority and acknowledges the vital role cycling has to play in generating enormous benefits for Europe, stating: "This Declaration recognises cycling as one of the most sustainable, accessible and inclusive, low-cost and healthy forms of transport and recreation, and its key importance for European society and economy."

ECF played a key role in shaping the final document through intensive, evidence based advocacy, the provision of expert input and recommendations, submitting position papers and co-leading a stakeholder consultation in the Commission's Expert Group on Urban Mobility. We are proud of our contribution and the excellent cooperation with the cycling and sustainable mobility community and the institutions that helped deliver this stellar result for people who cycle in Europe, now and in the future.

The proposal is set to be adopted by the EU institutions in 2024. ECF stands ready to support the EU institutions with implementing the Declaration and unlocking its potential. ●

Belgian Deputy Prime Minister and Transport Minister, Georges Gilkinet, at ECF AGM 2023



## Growing national momentum for a more strategic approach to cycling

In 2023 our advocacy helped secure more EU Member State signatories to the Belgian-led European Bicycle Declaration, which called on the Commission to adopt an action plan at EU level to prioritise cycling. Fully 16 Member States – a clear majority – had signed on to the Declaration by the end of 2023, up from 11 countries at the end of 2022. This Member State backing was undoubtedly a key element in strengthening the ambitions of the Commission’s declaration. ECF was pleased to work closely on this with Belgian Deputy Prime Minister and Transport Minister, Georges Gilkinet, who also made his case to ECF members in a keynote address at our AGM in Brussels in March.

2023 also saw more countries commit to a more strategic approach to cycling by developing national strategies and policies. Our third annual State of National Cycling Strategies in Europe analysis published in December showed that four more countries (Belarus, Croatia, Hungary and Israel) have introduced a national cycling strategy and that three more (Ireland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland) have adopted similar policies to support and grow cycling. ●

## Making cycling more affordable and accessible

Our advocacy has helped to unlock a new source of funding for cycling in the form of the EU Social Climate Fund. The €87 billion fund will support the most vulnerable citizens affected by energy and transport poverty. We lobbied to ensure the funds can be used for cycling infrastructure, bicycle purchase subsidies and bike sharing schemes. This will make cycling more accessible and affordable for more people. We will continue our efforts in this area to influence the Commission’s upcoming guidance documents and work with our members to achieve concrete investments. ●



## Two bike parking spaces set to become the norm

ECF’s work aimed at achieving minimum bicycle parking standards paid off when EU policy makers reached a provisional deal at the end of 2023 on the revised Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD). The legislation sets, for the first time, European minimum bicycle parking norms for virtually all buildings in the EU.

This agreement helps address a common barrier to cycling (where will I park my bike?) and represents a major win, not just for ECF, but for cyclists who will benefit from better and more secure bicycle parking in the years ahead. All new residential buildings and those undergoing major renovation, with more than three car parking spaces, will need to have at least two bicycle parking spaces. Minimum rules for non-residential buildings have also been introduced, as have rules on providing charging infrastructure for electric bicycles. ●

## More possibilities for cycling in the TEN-T

Meanwhile, as work on the revision of the TEN-T guidelines progressed in 2023, ECF continued the campaign to ensure cycling is better integrated into the EU’s flagship transport policy. Our advocacy led to improvements to the proposal by influencing the positions of the Parliament and the Member States to highlight that major European infrastructure investments – such as motorways or railways – should take walking and cycling into account, especially within functional urban areas. This should open the door to better plans for cycling and more investments in cycling, for example in the over-400 TEN-T urban nodes. If just 1% of future TEN-T project costs are spent on cycling infrastructure, this could mean an extra €500 million – 1 billion per year for cycling. ●



ECF CEO Jill Warren (third from right) at COP28



## Cycling on the world stage

Enabling more people to walk and cycle safely is essential to achieving the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, yet walking and cycling historically have lacked priority in the transport mix and the wider climate agenda. To address this, in 2022 ECF became a founding member of the Partnership for Active Travel and Health (PATH), a coalition of walking and cycling organisations calling for governments to invest more in walking and cycling as a key solution to the climate, health and equity challenges we face.

In 2023 ECF went to COP28 in Dubai, as a UN-accredited observer NGO and as a core coordinating partner in PATH to continue this work. This included promoting PATH's new analysis of National Policies for Walking and Cycling in all UNFCCC countries. The analysis built on a report released by PATH in May 2023 on National Policies for Walking and Cycling in International Transport Forum countries. It showed that although momentum for walking and cycling is growing, most countries significantly undervalue the potential of walking and cycling as a solution to climate, health and equity challenges. The report also includes a template to assist governments in including effective policy support for walking and cycling in their Nationally Determined Contributions.

ECF had a highly visible presence at COP, representing the cycling movement at numerous events on COP Transport Day and co-hosting an official COP side event. We also coordinated a successful campaign with an open letter to the UNFCCC, governments and COP negotiators calling for greater prioritisation and investment in walking and cycling as a quick, affordable and reliable way to decarbonise transport and improve people's lives. Over 400 non-profits from over 70 countries signed on by the end of COP.

The COP transport agendas have long been dominated by the electrification of motorised vehicles. Thanks to ECF's and PATH's efforts and inputs to consultations leading up to the COP, the UNFCCC High-level Champions Team has taken note of, and shown support for, our demands for greater prioritisation of walking and cycling. With an eye on COP29 next year, ECF and our PATH partners are ready to continue this work to unlock more of active mobility's potential to save the climate. ●



## New tools to assess cycling infrastructure and cargo bike friendliness

In 2023 we were proud to launch two new tools that provide useful data and valuable insights to support the evidence based advocacy work of ECF and our members. The lack of consistent, comparable data on a European scale has traditionally made it very difficult to assess the quantity and quality of existing cycling infrastructure and calculate additional needs. To fill this gap and map out a baseline for cycling infrastructure, ECF launched QECIO 2.0 in July after extensive piloting and development. The interactive tool uses OpenStreetMap (OSM) data to analyse the completeness, connectedness and quality of different types of cycling infrastructure across Europe. It contains insights on infrastructure from 37 countries, over 1500 regions and maps over 460,000km of cycling infrastructure. We have already been using it to credibly quantify and raise awareness of the volume of additional cycling infrastructure needed to make Europe's major cities and regions fully cycleable.

The Cargo Bike Friendly Cities dashboard is a comprehensive tool launched in February 2023 to provide essential baseline data and insights on cargo bike trends, developments, policies, and investments in 125 cities around Europe. Since its launch, the dashboard has generated a lot of interest for its potential to catalyse investments in cargo bikes, strengthen advocacy campaigns, influence policies and help cargo bike businesses grow. We have already witnessed tangible impacts, as cities like Vienna and Ghent have been using the dashboard to guide the development of their cargo bike policies. ●

Winners of the ECF Awards in Leipzig



## ECF Awards celebrate cycling leaders

The second edition of the ECF Awards took place in 2023, with the award winners unveiled during Velo-city 2023 Leipzig. Our awards recognise and shine a spotlight on those pioneering initiatives to advance cycling in Europe. We thank the sponsors for their kind support in making these awards a reality.

The winners of the four award categories were unveiled during the third day of the conference at the official award ceremony hosted by ECF President Henk Swarttouw and ECF CEO Jill Warren before a full house of conference delegates.

We look forward to unveiling the winners of the 2024 edition of the awards during Velo-city 2024 Ghent in June. ●

The categories, winners and sponsors of the 2023 awards were:



- The **City of Helsingborg** for the Cycling Infrastructure Award
- The **City of Essen** for the Cycle-Friendly Employer Award, sponsored by JobRad
- The **City of Oslo** for the Road Safety Award, sponsored by Geveko Markings
- The **City of Heidelberg** for the Cycling Improvement Award, sponsored by Eco-Counter



## Projects that support our advocacy

In 2023, ECF concluded two European projects, including the EU Cycle project and the Safer Cycling Advocate Program (SCAP).

In SCAP we produced a best practice guide on cycling safety which lists positive measures to promote cycling. In EU Cycle we created an online database comprising 100 state-of-the-art cycling projects which underscored ECF's commitment to make cycling green, safe and accessible to all in Europe.

In 2023 ECF welcomed the following new projects that support our advocacy aims: SAFE LMD, PACTE+, UPPER, REALLOCATE, NCPN and Bike2Green.



EU Cycle project meeting



### Safe Last Mile Delivery (SAFE LMD)

The fast-paced expansion of e-commerce, which accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic, has resulted in unprecedented pressure on those working in the Last Mile Deliveries (LMDs) sector. SAFE LMD, an EU-funded Erasmus+ project aims to address this by focusing on safe and green logistics for last mile delivery. The project aims to reshape inefficiencies within the urban logistics chain related to courier and postal (CEP) environmental and social sustainability.

In 2023 there were three successful partner meetings including the Fourth Transnational Project Meeting in Zagreb with project partners from BGZ (Germany), the University of Zagreb, the European Certification and Qualification Association (Austria) and Exelia (Greece). The meeting marked the unveiling of a vocational training program in safe and sustainable last mile delivery operations in an urban context. The curriculum comprises seven segments in various languages which aims to provide educational and business opportunities through an EU wide recognised certification delivered by our consortium partner, ECQA. SAFE LMD will promote the project in connection with Velo-city 2024 in Ghent and encourage participants to test their curriculum.



### Promoting Active Travel Throughout Europe (PACTE+)

Addressing the issue of sedentary lifestyles is a growing challenge in many urban contexts, where on a daily basis 235 million Europeans are inactive. The EU-funded PACTE+ project, led by the Sport and Citizenship Think Tank, aims to turn cities into active cities in the belief that encouraging cities to promote physical activity is key to improving individual and collective well-being. The project's central objectives comprise measuring the impact of city policies to promote physical activity through four pilot interventions.

In 2023, ECF contributed to workshops on field interventions in Echallens, Switzerland, workshops offering bespoke support for cities, a workshop on active governance in Fredrikstad, Norway and a workshop for the "Matrix of Change" in Munich. Project work will continue with the organisation of a workshop on sustainable mobility with the city of Angers in 2024.



PACTE+ project meeting



**Unleashing the potential of public transport in Europe (UPPER)**

Transport represents almost a quarter of all greenhouse gas emissions and is the main cause of air pollution in urban zones. The UPPER EU Project aims to address this challenge by strengthening the role of public transport in Europe as the cornerstone of innovative and sustainable mobility. The project will implement a combination of measures to push people out of cars and into public transport in cities across Europe.

Starting with a successful kick-off in Brussels in January of 2023, this initiative selected and defined Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to increase public transport uptake by over 30% and user satisfaction by over 25%.

In 2024, ECF will advise on the implementation of infrastructure to redistribute space in favour of public transport and active mobility such as multimodal hubs and dedicated corridors for different transport modes. In addition, ECF will advise on the development of local solutions to incentivise the use of public transport or the integration of walking and cycling in multimodal trips. The UPPER EU Project, once complete, will redefine how we can move from one place to another and foster a greener transportation environment.



**REALLOCATE**

The REALLOCATE project focuses on re-thinking the design of streets and public spaces to improve climate-friendly active transport everywhere. The project will transform cities into green, inclusive and safe public spaces and work to ultimately re-imagine and re-design urban mobility to support cities in accelerating their transition towards climate neutrality.

The project was launched successfully in Dublin in 2023, with a technical webinar series. ECF proudly presented on “Street design: Traffic calming and shifting the modal share towards sustainable modes” and gave another presentation on cycling safety. In 2024, ECF, alongside 36 partners in 12 countries across Europe, will contribute to location-specific mentoring on creating bicycle-friendly cities and provide cycling policy expertise.

**Nordic Cycle Power Network (NCPN)**

Public recognition of the key role of the bicycle in addressing climate change is steadily growing, with a new UN resolution proclaiming the bicycle as a tool to combat the climate crisis. To accelerate this green transition in the transport sector, facilitating knowledge sharing across countries is essential. Planners across Nordic countries have begun to share knowledge in informal networks, however, these networks currently rely on personal relationships and voluntary resources. The Nordic Cycle Power Network (NCPN), initiated in 2023, aims to activate a knowledge-sharing network among municipal and regional planners working to improve conditions for cycling.

Led by Nordreggio and funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers, the network will identify actionable measures that can be implemented in Nordic regions to facilitate and enable a significant increase in biking trips to replace car use and drive down CO2 emissions from land-based transport. To accomplish this in 2024, the network will organise thematic workshops and study visits to explore new approaches to strength municipal and regional bicycle strategies.



REALLOCATE project meeting



Bike2Green project meeting



### Bike2Green

Despite improvements and investments in urban cycling infrastructure in recent years, daily cycling levels remain suboptimal in many places. Bike2Green aims to support the social acceptance and further adoption of active mobility, thereby contributing to the green transition with sustainable transport. The project will accomplish this over a two-year period by organising a number of pilot activities that incentivise participants with rewards that can be spent in local shops.

In December 2023 the lead partner, KTH, hosted a successful kick-off in Stockholm for the project that will involve 1,500 users in pilot activities organised by schools, universities and research centres as well as local shop owners.



ICTr project meeting



### Cycling tourism

2023 was an exciting year with notable developments in EU co-funded projects for EuroVelo!

In June, ECF took part in the final project meeting of the AtlanticOnBike project extension, focusing on EuroVelo 1 – Atlantic Coast Route. The project officially concluded after introducing major advancements and many useful deliverables, including the EuroVelo Route Planner, a long-anticipated feature on EuroVelo.com.

In March, a new project was launched for EuroVelo 13 – Iron Curtain Trail, aiming to develop innovative cycling tourism products in Central Europe. Covering over 3,000 km from Poland to Croatia, this Interreg Central Europe initiative places a strong emphasis on supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and promoting sustainable tourism.



Adding to the excitement, Biking Baltic UPGRADE started in September on the EuroVelo 10 – Baltic Sea Cycle Route. Over the next three years, this Interreg South Baltic project will actively support SMEs in developing strategic bicycle-friendly services and cycling tourism products and offers in the South Baltic region. ●



# ECF route to success in 2023

## February

- The European Parliament passes a landmark Resolution on developing an EU Cycling Strategy.
- ECF launches Cargo Bike Friendly Cities Dashboard.
- Gdańsk named as the host of Velo-city 2025.

World Bicycle Day celebration takes place with the launch of the “Cycling for healthier and more inclusive communities” report

## June

## March

- ECF AGM is hosted in Brussels.
- Frans Timmermans pledges a European Cycling Declaration at the CIE Summit.
- The new EuroVelo Overview Map is launched.

## May

- Velo-city 2023 Leipzig takes place with a record attendance of 1,500 Velo-citizens.
- ECF participates in the International Transport Forum (ITF) Summit 2023.



ECF publishes a first-of-its-kind analysis of financial investments in cycling projects made by EU Member States using EU Structural Funds.

## August

- First annual PATH Symposium event takes place with over 300 registered delegates
- The Iberian Cycle Route revealed as the future EuroVelo 16.

## September

- The European Commission proposes the historic European Declaration on Cycling.
- EuroVelo & Cycling Tourism Conference takes place in Izmir, Türkiye.

## October

## November

- Velo-city 2023 Leipzig named a finalist for the ICCA & BestCities Global Alliance, Incredible Impacts Programme.
- ECF participates in an event to mark the first ever UN-declared World Sustainable Transport Day.

## July

- QECIO 2.0 - Quantifying Europe's Cycling Infrastructure using OpenStreetMap tool launched.
- EuroVelo Route Planner launched.

## December

- ECF attends COP28 to urge world leaders to give more priority and investment to cycling as part of efforts to decarbonising transport.
- Agreement on introducing minimum bicycle parking in the EU in the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive reached.
- ECF publishes third edition of "The state of national cycling strategies".

# 2 ECF Members: Cycling advocates delivering

Our ECF Members continue to have an instrumental role in making the case for cycling on a local, regional and national level across more than 40 countries in Europe and beyond, with considerable impact and important advocacy successes during the last year.

## IN A NUTSHELL



72

Full and Associate Members



43

Countries represented by ECF Members



### Networking

In-person events at the AGM 2023 in Brussels and Velo-city 2023 Leipzig



3

New ECF Members in 2023





## Welcoming new Members in 2023

ECF welcomed three new organisations as Associate Members this year. L'Heureux Cyclage and Let's bike it! were admitted during the ECF

Annual General Meeting 2023 which took place last March in Brussels, with BYCS joining our community last June. ●

Participants at ECF AGM 2023 in Brussels



## AGM 2023: Gathering in the heart of Europe

The ECF family came together once more for ECF's 2023 Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 31 March and 1 April. Over 50 representatives of cycling organisations from across Europe gathered in Brussels to discuss, network and exchange on all things cycling advocacy. ECF was very grateful to have Georges Gilkinet, Belgian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Mobility as keynote speaker. At the end of the meeting, ECF's Croatian member Sindikat Biciklista was announced as the host of the 2024 AGM, to take place in Zagreb. ●

## A selection of highlights from our members in 2023

**ADFC (German Cyclists' Association)**, an ECF Member in Germany, launched a massive 'RADvolution' campaign calling for the modernisation of the road traffic law, to ensure that cycling is finally placed at the heart of transport policy while also demanding equal rights for all road users, more space for cyclists, better cycle paths and safe roads for everyone. The campaign has attracted widespread support, with an ADFC rally in Berlin attracting 50,000 cyclists from across Germany joining the call for a RADvolution. ADFC also supported the global climate strike "Fridays for Future – Germany" to highlight the importance of the bicycle in the sustainable transport transition required to meet climate targets. As a thank you to the cyclists who ride their bikes during the winter months, and in poor infrastructure conditions, ADFC distributed cinnamon biscuits across over 100 locations in Germany, once again highlighting the urgent need for change to improve conditions for year-round cycling.



In January 2023, Switzerland passed a landmark new cycle path law, the culmination of eight years of work by ECF Swiss member, **Pro Velo Switzerland**, and a referendum which saw a staggering 74% majority vote in favour. For the first time, the Cycle Route Act obliges cantons and municipalities to plan and build cycle path networks, to do so within the next five years, and to complete them by 2042. In addition, a specialist cycling centre must be created and planning principles must be considered. Pro Velo Switzerland welcomes this milestone and is committed to supporting cantons and municipalities in the process.

Similarly, ECF French member **Fédération Française des Usagers de la Bicyclette (FUB)** succeeded in securing the inclusion of cycle networks and station parking in the law defining "metropolitan regional express services (SERM)". While the initial definition focused on the need for SERMs to be structured around rail services, thanks to FUB's efforts, cycle networks were included as an integral part of these projects. FUB was also quick to mobilise against the cycling ban in pedestrianised town centres being implemented in Nice, Agen and Lille, which received a great deal of media coverage.

A "cycling and gender equality" group was set up to work on promoting, supporting, raising awareness and taking action on governance. FUB was also busy in 2023 developing materials and publications such as lobbying guides for local groups and a white paper on cycling and public transport, but also with developing inclusive approaches to attract new cycle users with a focus on the underrepresentation of women in cycling. In March 2023, FUB held its 23rd annual congress in Rennes, attracting close to 600 attendees and featuring the French Minister of Transport.



For ECF UK member **Cycling UK**, 2023 was all about pushing for increased investment in active travel across all four nations in the UK. Investment in Scotland is now at record levels, with Cycling UK continuing to push the Scottish Government to fulfil its commitment to spend 10% of the transport budget on active travel. Funding for cycling and walking also increased in Wales, with the Welsh Government introducing a default 20mph speed limit in built-up areas, the most significant change to limit new road building in the UK for decades; and to prioritise well-being when making transport decisions. Meanwhile, in Northern Ireland, continuous pressure on the Department for Infrastructure has paid dividends, avoiding cuts to funded programmes and increasing awareness of the importance of active travel. However, in England, political changes have led to a shift in attitude towards active travel, with drastic cuts to the active travel budget that Cycling UK is campaigning to reverse. Consequently, much of Cycling UK's advocacy work is now focused on the next UK election, likely to take place late in 2024, and on securing political will for better cycling policies.

**Fietsersbond**, an ECF Dutch member, was very active during elections in 2023. On a provincial level, Fietsersbond advocated for ambitious cycling policies and conducted an analysis of coalition agreements with regard to cycling programmes, which revealed a lack of ambition in most provinces. On the national level, an online tool was developed to showcase the reactions of political parties to Fietsersbond's positions, whose key demand is the investment of a billion Euros in cyclists'

safety. Road safety is an overarching priority for Fietsersbond, who also co-authored a report on the safety, or lack thereof, of school routes. Among their big wins for 2023 is a motion adopted by the National Parliament obliging the state-owned railway company to provide free parking in all their bicycle parking facilities for the first 24 hours and to consider installing more bicycle compartments on their trains. Fietsersbond also succeeded in preventing the closure of an important ferry boat service near the city of Utrecht, and in advocating a pedestrian and cyclists' bridge to eventually replace it. Fietsersbond also had a year of notable collaborations, including but not limited to City Deal Fietsen, a program to make cycling available and affordable with national ministries and cities, and a publication of guidelines for the 15-minute-city with Wandelnet and consultancy Rebel.

ECF Italian member **FIAB** had a busy year as well. Activities included highly impactful events such as the 300 nationwide Bimbibici events promoting cycling for children and its ComuniCiclabili project. This involved 179 municipalities representing 20% of Italy's population in its sixth edition. Other big wins following years of advocacy included Trenitalia's new train service with 900 cycle spaces daily and Abruzzo becoming the largest 30 km/h city, implemented after the launch of FIAB's 30 km/h city campaign. FIAB received a national award for sustainability in the mobility category at the Ecomondo Fair. FIAB's hard work continues, in particular on road safety appeals to national politicians, and on denouncing the cuts to already planned cycling investments.



ECF Danish member, the **Danish Cyclists' Federation**, together with the Danish Parliament's Transport Committee, co-organised a cycling conference at the Danish National Parliament building – the first of its kind. The conference attracted significant political attention and brought together a diverse group of stakeholders to discuss how to get more Danes cycling, with a view to reversing the downward trend in numbers. Important campaigns towards this goal also achieved record numbers in 2023; approximately 100,000 children cycled during September, during the All Children Cycle campaign, and over 50,000 people cycled during May for the annual Bike to Work campaign.

The Norwegian Cyclists' Association appointed a new CEO and elected a new board of directors, who are tasked with implementing a bold strategy approved in October by the General Assembly. Our ECF Norwegian member was also part of the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation's production team during their slow TV programme called "Cycling Summer." The show was filmed using "directing bikes" carrying cameras, people and technical equipment. ●

# 3 ECF networks: Connecting cycling

Our global community of local and regional authorities, cycle-friendly employers, the Women in Cycling network, Scientists for Cycling and more continues to grow and reinforce ECF's efforts in establishing cycling as a fully-fledged mode of transport.

## IN A NUTSHELL



**54,000,000+**

inhabitants living in the territory of the Cities & Regions for Cyclists (CRC) network



**10**

new CRC members in 2023



**750+**

Certified Cycle-Friendly employers (CFE)



**700,000+**

Employees in CFE Certified Employers

## Cities & Regions for Cyclists

Our Cities & Regions for Cyclists (CRC) Network welcomed ten new members this year, expanding the representation of local and regional administrations committed to cycling to well over 54 million citizens.

Following years of investments in cycling and exemplary mobility management practices, Helsingborg (Sweden) was awarded as Sweden's best city in cycling promotion for 2022 by Swedish ECF Member Cykelfrämjandet. Among the many measures and projects in place to encourage more cycling, the city has inaugurated a new bike parking facility, located beside the city's central station, to accommodate 540 bikes. Helsingborg also received the ECF Cycling Infrastructure Award during Velo-city 2023 Leipzig for the Varvsbron Bridge, a landmark pedestrian and cycling bridge which connects the up-and-coming smart neighbourhood of Oceanhamnen with the city centre and a nearby public transport hub.

The Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg (Germany) intends to play a pioneering role in the mobility transition, embracing cycling, and has set ambitious mobility targets, earmarking significant investments towards achieving them. The Senate of Hamburg invested about €87 million in 2020 and about €91 million in 2021 for cycling infrastructure, services and communication. This translates to approximately €49 per capita per year.



The Province of Groningen (Netherlands) is prioritising connectivity between its towns, villages and city in an ambitious Mobility Strategy 2022-2034, which presents long-term policy objectives, including increasing the number of cyclists by 20% by 2027. The province is working on several projects to reach this goal, including building more cycle highways, maintaining high-quality cycling infrastructure and much more.

VENECO (Belgium) is an intermunicipal partnership of 21 municipalities around Ghent which supports the development and implementation of local policy, as well as facilitates concrete projects. VENECO works in a vast range of policy areas including sustainable mobility. The partnership also takes an active role in the activities of the Ghent Transport Region.

The Central Denmark Region has long been committed to developing high-quality cycling infrastructure in urban and rural areas. It is currently collaborating with ten municipalities to connect cycle path networks into a 1,000km network of cycle superhighways. The highway is to be connected with public transport to make cycling an element of everyday transportation.

Leipzig (Germany) has been very active this year, hosting both the record breaking edition of Velo-city 2023 and this year's CRC Network Day. The city is committed to leveraging cycling for its ongoing transformation in the coming years. Strovolos Municipality (Cyprus) is working towards the development of a new Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP), together with five municipalities of the greater urban area of Nicosia District – including Nicosia Municipality, also a new member of our CRC Network, for a holistic plan of the entire urban agglomeration, the Nicosia SUMP. The new SUMP foresees the provision of safe walking and cycling infrastructure, to encourage active mobility for short to medium length trips by upgrading and completing the cycling network.

Also joining the CRC Network in 2023 are the Israeli cities of Tel Aviv-Yafo and Jerusalem. ●



## Cycle-Friendly Employer Consortium

ECF's Cycle-Friendly Employer (CFE) certification – currently implemented in 15 countries – is gaining momentum across the continent. The number of certified employers has almost doubled in the last year to well over 750 employers, while the number of employees at CFE Certified employers has surpassed 700,000.

The City of Essen (Germany) was awarded the ECF Cycle-Friendly Employer Award at Velo-city 2023 Leipzig. Since earning a Silver level CFE certification in 2019, the city was recertified with a Gold level CFE Certification in 2022 by CFE member ADFC. The city has been sponsoring other local CFE companies

and joining forces with organisations and authorities to form a network of cycle-friendly employers. The European Health and Digital Executive Agency (HaDEA), also renewed its certification in 2023, becoming the first EU institution to be awarded Gold level CFE Certification by CFE member in Belgium Fietsersbond. CFE member in Ireland, Cycling Solutions Ireland has awarded the Sustainable Energy Authority and the Central Bank of Ireland with Gold level CFE Certification, recognising both for their ongoing commitments to workplace mobility and transport decarbonisation. Finally, FIAB, the CFE member in Italy, has awarded Gold level CFE Certification to the Bologna airport and Poste Italiane



Members of the CFE Consortium continue to promote behaviour change towards a modal shift across European workplaces and achieve substantial recognition of the role of cycle-friendly employers by decision-makers at all levels. ●



## Scientists for Cycling

ECF's network Scientists for Cycling brings together researchers interested in cycling issues from different academic fields worldwide. In 2023, the network had 227 members interested in contributing to ECF's knowledge base and mission with their academic expertise.

The academic track at the Velo-city conference in Leipzig attracted almost 100 abstracts. In the five "From Research to Practice" sessions that were created from the call, academics could discuss their results with cycling practitioners, creating a link with added value for both sides. For the first time, we also organised academic poster sessions at Velo-city, which were well visited. Preparations for the academic track of the Velo-city conference in Ghent are now in full swing, and we hope to build on the successes of the 2023 edition.

ECF CEO Jill Warren speaking at the POLIS Conference 2023



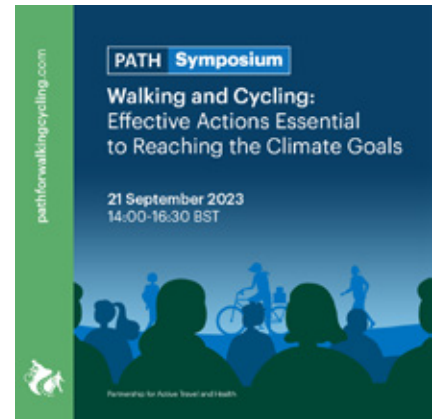
## Women in Cycling

The Women in Cycling (WIC) network continued to develop and grow during 2023, supporting and encouraging the visibility of women across the sector.

The network was present at Velo-city 2023 Leipzig in May with a full day programme including two sessions, a WIC lunch and evening drinks. The 'Women in Cycling' session focused on promoting equitable mobility systems for everyone and turned an eye towards concrete solutions required to make the cycling sector fairer and friendlier for women. Additionally,

a "Women in Cycling Networking Breakfast" took place at the Eurobike fair in June, highlighting the needs of women working in the cycling industry. The series of webinars, 'Meet the Experts' continued throughout the year, showcasing women experts in the sector and celebrating their achievements.

By the end of 2023, the membership of the network's LinkedIn group had reached over 2000 members, with 300 new members joining since the end of 2022.



# WOMEN IN CYCLING.



# 4 EuroVelo: Steady growth and lasting heritage

2023 was a year to remember for EuroVelo, with many developments including 500km of new route extensions, a route planner and a new candidate route to join the network, as well as an incredible EuroVelo & Cycling Tourism Conference in Izmir.

## IN A NUTSHELL



**60,000+**

Kilometres of EuroVelo routes are developed and ready to cycle as of 2023



**270+**

Participants at the EuroVelo & Cycling Tourism Conference 2023 in Izmir



**11%**

Increased traffic on EuroVelo routes from January to September 2023 compared to 2019



**2.5 million**

Number of web sessions on EuroVelo.com in 2023



## Spotlight on data and statistics

The EuroVelo Management Team continued to collect and publish data about route development, communications, and route usage as part of the ongoing development of the EuroVelo Data Hub, launched in 2021.

The digital statistics show another positive year for EuroVelo online, with 2.5 million web sessions and over 1.5 million visitors to EuroVelo.com. Boosted by a European Commission post about EuroVelo on LinkedIn and Instagram, we broke all records for the highest number of website visitors in a day on 25 June. On social media, Facebook followers surpassed 50,000 and Instagram grew to more than 23,000 fans.

According to the EuroVelo Route Development Status Report 2022-2023, the EuroVelo network reached the milestone of two-thirds of the network being ready to cycle, a 2% increase on the previous year. Notable improvements occurred in the Italian sections of EuroVelo 5 – Via Romea (Francigena), as well as increases of more than 5% in the development levels of the Greek, Hungarian, and Italian sections. Nevertheless, faster improvement is needed if the goal of a fully cyclable network by 2030 is to be achieved.

Thanks to a partnership with Eco-Counter, we were able to monitor the usage of EuroVelo routes for the second year in a row. Ridership grew by 1% from January to September 2023 compared to last year, and 11% compared to the same period in 2019. EuroVelo 8 – Mediterranean Route is the fastest-growing one, with traffic increasing by 15%. ●

## Route extensions and a new planner tool

In March, while at ITB Berlin, we announced an ambitious expansion of the European Cycle Route Network: EuroVelo 3 – Pilgrim Route. Previously ending in Santiago de Compostela, it was extended to reach the ancient end of the known world: Cape Finisterre, in Galicia, Spain. At the same time, the newest route in the network, EuroVelo 14 – Waters of Central Europe, was completed with the official addition of a 400km stretch. The route, now ending in Debrecen, visits the most important Hungarian rivers, lakes, thermal spa towns and the scenic Hungarian capital, Budapest, where it meets with EuroVelo 6 – Atlantic-Black Sea Route.

On the occasion of World Tourism Day on 27 September, we announced a new candidate route to join the EuroVelo network by 2028 at the latest: the Iberian Cycle Route, the

future EuroVelo 16. It will connect Lisbon to Pamplona via Madrid, passing through vibrant cities and rural landscapes. The addition of this cycle route hopes to contribute to tackling depopulation issues in the Iberian Peninsula by promoting sustainable and slow tourism.

Thanks to the AtlanticOnBike Interreg project extension, we were able to develop a much-awaited digital feature: a route planner. The tool allows users to plan their trip on EuroVelo routes, add intermediate destinations, personalise the search, and download the GPX tracks. It is already one of the most popular features on the EuroVelo website. ●



EuroVelo Schematic Diagram (2023)

Main stage at the EuroVelo &amp; Cycling Tourism Conference in Izmir



## An outstanding EuroVelo & Cycling Tourism Conference in Izmir

The EuroVelo & Cycling Tourism Conference 2023 took place in Izmir, Türkiye, from 11 to 13 October. Around 270 cycling, tourism, and heritage professionals gathered in this historical city to exchange ideas and knowledge under the theme of: Cycling: A new perspective on heritage. Over 50 international speakers from 17 countries provided expertise and discussed ideas on topics such as the politics and future of cycling tourism, nature conservation, marketing tools to promote cycling and heritage, and so much more.

The conference was opened by the Minister of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Türkiye, Mehmet Nuri Ersoy. Further highlights included a dinner in the Ancient Smyrna Agora with an inspiring speech by the Mayor of Izmir, Mustafa Tunç Soyer, a cyclist himself, and an opportunity to explore EuroVelo 8 – Mediterranean Route on bicycles as part of a technical visit.

The host city of the 2024 EuroVelo & Cycling Tourism Conference was announced in Izmir: Viborg. The Danish city will welcome the EuroVelo community from 23 to 25 September 2024. The city – a key meeting point along the ancient Danish route Hærvejen, now part of EuroVelo 3 – promises to play host to another memorable conference. ●

Bicycle ride during the EuroVelo &amp; Cycling Tourism Conference in Izmir



## Growing the network

This year's EuroVelo General Meeting, held in Izmir and online on 11 October, was the largest to date, with all National EuroVelo Coordination Centres (NECCs) registered alongside four observer organisations. Aside from sharing the latest news regarding the development of the network and hearing about the achievements and challenges of our NECCs, we were delighted to welcome the Centre for Environment (CZZS) as the National EuroVelo Coordinator for Bosnia and Herzegovina. This new member brings the total number of NECCs to 24 and will contribute to increasing EuroVelo and cycling tourism in the Western Balkans.

During the EuroVelo General Meeting, Karine Dupuy, CEO of France Vélo Tourisme, was elected as a member of the EuroVelo Council. She replaces Camille Thomé, Vélo & Territoires Director, who was a member of the Council for a record 12 years. There are currently eight seats on the EuroVelo Council, representing NECCs and the wider EuroVelo community, while providing strategic guidance to the ECF Board and the EuroVelo Management Team. ●



EuroVelo General Meeting in Izmir

## Record support by the EuroVelo community

2023 marked a record-breaking year for EuroVelo donations from individuals, as the community came out in greater numbers than ever to support the European cycle route network. The launch of the brand-new, first-of-its-kind EuroVelo Calendar 2024 and the new edition of the EuroVelo Overview Map in March, as well as the release of the new and improved EuroVelo cycling jerseys in late 2022, laid the foundations for this encouraging development. ●



New EuroVelo publications in 2023 (Brand Guide, Transnational Signing Manual and Usage, route development and digital statistics reports)



# 5 **Velo-city:** Leipzig hosts the world cycling summit

On 9-12 May, Velo-city 2023 Leipzig welcomed more than 1,500 Velo-citizens under its theme: Leading the Transition. In the spirit of reshaping cities and revolutionising our sense of space, this record breaking edition of the world cycling summit set the agenda for the future of cycling and active mobility with inspiring contributions.

## IN A NUTSHELL



**1,500+**

Participants in attendance



**430+**

Speakers at Velo-city 2023 Leipzig



**80+**

Nationalities represented at Velo-city 2023 Leipzig



**45%**

Women speakers, a new record



**90**

Exhibitors at Velo-city 2023 Leipzig



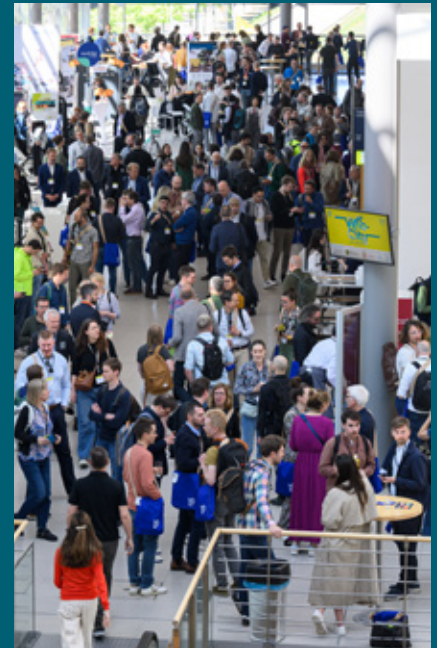
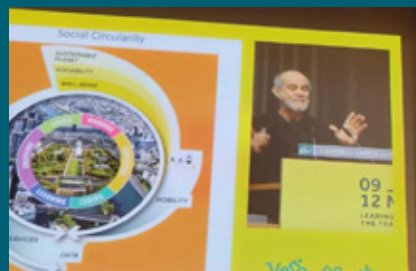
**10+ km**

of cycle lanes built in Leipzig

Side event outside the venue at Velo-city 2023



Carlos Moreno at Velo-city 2023



Visitors and exhibitors in Leipzig

## A year of records

2023 was a great year for the annual world cycling summit, with the highest number of participants to date including 37% from public authorities. A groundbreaking 45% of speakers taking centre stage were women, a new record, and the programme was packed with over 80 sessions, propelling the conference to new heights.

Velo-city has a long history of inspiring political leaders and decision makers to invest in cycling, and this year was no exception. Renowned as a global knowledge exchange platform, Velo-city is where advocates, cities, policymakers, researchers, and industry leaders meet to shape the future of cycling and sustainable urban development. In 2023, the impact once again extended beyond the walls of the conference. From Oslo to Brazil, 16 mayors signed a declaration initiated by Leipzig Mayor Burkhard Jung to make cycling a fully-fledged mode of transport for all, bringing positive environmental and health benefits for a combined 22 million citizens they represent.

Leipzig, whose history has been one of change and transition, took the conference as an opportunity to catalyse its sustainable mobility transition. With a plethora of changes to show for itself, cycling became possible on the inner city ring road for the first time since 1975, and 10.6km of new cycling infrastructure was built in the months leading up to the conference. Moreover, Leipzig's first Superblock was implemented during the conference.

Under the flag of regaining space for citizens, cycling took the hearts and minds of citizens by storm. Over the course of organising the conference, the narrative surrounding cycling and mobility underwent significant changes for the better in the realms of media, politics, and the public.

In recognition for creating lasting impact in the host city and beyond, in the autumn Velo-city 2023 Leipzig was shortlisted for the ICCA & Best Cities Global Alliance Incredible Impacts Programme. ●

## Preparations for Velo-city 2024 Ghent in full swing

Velo-city Leipzig concluded with the handover of the Velo-city flag to next year's host city. Filip Watteeuw, Deputy Mayor of Ghent for Mobility, Public Space, and Urban Planning, received the Velo-city flag on stage. The Velo-city 2024 Ghent journey officially commenced with the flag embarking on an epic 700km+ odyssey, carried by bicycle from Leipzig to Ghent.

From 18-21 June 2024, the global cycling community will turn its eyes to the quirky Belgian city. A pocket-sized place that embodies the energy, dynamism, and bravado of a metropolis, Ghent has long placed the bicycle on a pedestal. With the introduction of the modern circulation plan under Filip Watteeuw's leadership, cycling levels surged to 35% already in 2018, surpassing the target that had been set for 2030!

We can't wait to welcome you in Ghent and to explore the theme "Connecting through Cycling" with you from various angles. ●

# 6 ECF outreach and communications

In 2023, ECF's outreach work helped place cycling at the forefront of important public debates in Europe, and worldwide, online and offline, complementing our advocacy work and supporting members, networks and the wider community of cyclists. We work hard to ensure the voice of cyclists is heard.

## IN A NUTSHELL



### Website

- **80** professional articles published across ECF websites
- **428,000+** ECF.com pageviews





## Social media

- **1,135** posts across all ECF channels
  - **2,031,370+** total impressions
  - **75,780+** total followers
  - **2,280+** new followers in 2023
- 



## Newsletter and press

- **46** newsletters
  - **9,530+** ECF newsletter contacts
  - **332** ECF mentions in the press
  - **Appearance in high-level media** including The New York Times, Forbes, Politico, Euractiv, Deutsche Welle, Die Welt, RAI, Le Soir, RTBF
- 



## Events

- **Seven** public events hosted or co-hosted by ECF
  - **145** speaking slots at major events
  - **3,300+** participants and viewers
  - **530+** high-level speakers at ECF events
-

# 7 Finance and staff organisation

The ECF Board produces a separate Financial Report which provides more detail on the sources and uses of income in the organisation. The category breakdowns of our income and expenditures are provided below. ECF wishes to use the Annual Report to acknowledge our major contributors.

## IN A NUTSHELL



### European Commission

ECF gratefully acknowledges financial support from the European Commission which funded part of our work in 2023: CINEA LIFE+, Horizon Europe, Interreg, Erasmus+, European Social Fund+, Driving Urban Transition.



### Cycling Industries Europe

We are also grateful for financial support from Cycling Industries Europe, which provides important co-funding for our advocacy projects and related projects and activities.

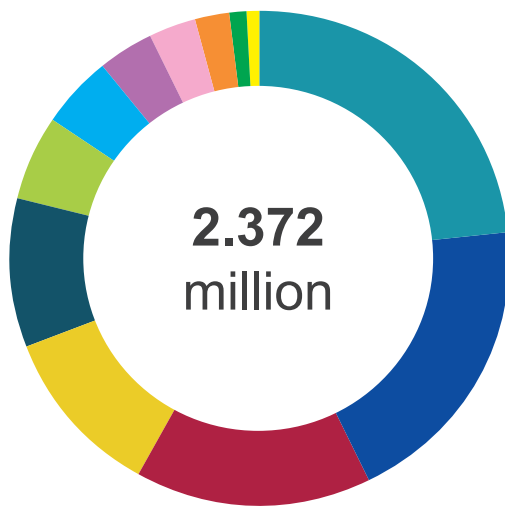


### Memberships and networks

ECF gratefully acknowledges support from our ECF Full and Associate Members, from members of the Cities & Regions for Cyclists Network, National EuroVelo Coordination Centres and Coordinators and from Velo-city host cities.

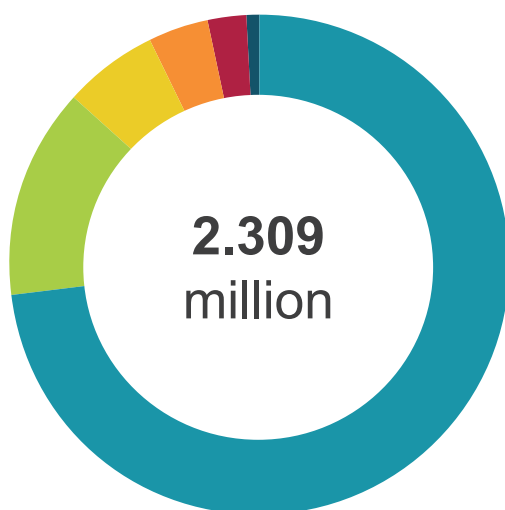


## 2023 income



- 24% CIE donation
- 19% EuroVelo
- 15% CINEA Grant
- 11% Velo-city
- 10% Membership fees
- 6% Various EU projects
- 5% Cities & Regions for Cyclists
- 4% Philanthropic donations
- 3% Sponsorships and Commercial Agreements, Subcontracting
- 2% Adjustments from previous years
- 1% Cycling Friendly Employers Consortium
- 1% Miscellaneous

## 2023 expenditures



- 73% Staff Salaries and Charges
- 14% Operating costs (rent, utilities, printing, etc.)
- 6% External providers (Accountancy, social secretariat, legal advice, etc.)
- 4% Travel
- 2% Other Charges (VAT charges + misc.)
- 1% ECF Board (only out-of-pocket travel)



ECF staff at Velo-city 2023 Leipzig

## In 2023, the ECF Board was composed of:

Francesco Baroncini, Angela Francke, Sidsel Birk Hjuler, Henk Swarttouw, Camille Thomé, Judit Tóth, Jan Vermeulen, Sir Graham Watson. ●

## ECF was served by the following staff members:

Philip Amaral, Michael Brennan, Aleksander Buczyński, Caroline Cerfontaine, Froso Christofides, Jessica Casagrande, Agathe Daudibon, Cassandre de Froidmont\*, Cian Delaney\*, Robyn Fleming\*, Alexandra Fournier, Florence Grégoire, Holger Haubold, Fabian Küster, Goran Lepen, Ben Luoma, Tari Majuru\*, Omer Malak, Eva Malovrh, Marta Orihuel\*, Lilia Raicu, Alex Rankin\*, Ivan Ratkovic, Anna-Karina Reibold, Maria Scandurra, Jill Warren, Ceri Woolsgrove, Fauzia Zalwango\*. ●

## ECF was supported by the following interns\*:

Chiara Benussi, Petar Brkovic, Andrea Chavez, Dalila Ferrari, Alicia Funes, Alzbeta Kincova, Criostoir Stephen King, Christos Konstantinou, Ellis Mourits, Noa Muste, Eulalie Ollivier, Chiara Sammito, Beate Schusta, Mark Sheridan. ●

\* part of the year

## About ECF

Founded in 1983, the European Cyclists' Federation is a Brussels-based independent non-profit association dedicated to achieving more and better cycling for all in Europe.

With more than 70 member organisations in over 40 countries, we unite the European cycling movements as the only civil society voice at the pan-European level, and as the world's largest and best-known cyclists' advocacy organisation.

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Lilia Raicu (Finance and staff)

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