



**SEGUNDO EJERCICIO DEL PROCESO SELECTIVO PARA EL INGRESO EN LA  
ESCALA DE TÉCNICOS FACULTATIVOS SUPERIORES DE ORGANISMOS  
AUTÓNOMOS DEL MINISTERIO DE MEDIO AMBIENTE**

**PARTE A - IDIOMA INGLÉS**



**Text : « World bicycle day »**

In 2018, the United Nations declared 3 June World Bicycle Day. Cycling represents a growing share of mobility. It is a healthy, green and flexible means of transport that helps achieve savings and generate jobs. However, a lot remains to be done when it comes to safety and suitable cycling infrastructure across the EU. Although the regulatory framework on cycling is determined at Member State level, with concrete action shaped locally, the EU provides best practice advice and financial support for infrastructure development. For its part, the European Parliament has regularly highlighted the importance of cycling and supported it as a means of transport.

**Cycling in the EU**

Today, there are an estimated 1 billion bicycles in the world – about as many as passenger cars. Figures show that bicycles are becoming an ever more important mode of transportation. However, big differences exist between EU Member States. A 2020 Eurobarometer survey shows that, while the use of cars remains dominant, 8 % of EU citizens – mainly in big cities – use a privately owned bike or scooter as their main mode of daily transport, with an additional 1 % using shared bikes or scooters on a daily basis. Numbers are the highest in the Netherlands (41 %), followed by Sweden (21 %). Meanwhile, daily cycling figures remain low (1–5 % of journeys) in about a third of all EU countries.

Cycling has several environmental and health benefits. It is an affordable and flexible means of transport that benefits both society as a whole and its individual members in a number of ways. For example, according to the European Cyclists' Federation (ECF), cycling generates global benefits of €150 billion per year, of which €90 billion concern the environment, public health and mobility. As a regular physical activity, cycling reduces the risks of heart disease, stroke, certain cancers and diabetes. Cycling can also help lessen greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution and noise. As a means of transport over short distances, it can help reduce traffic congestion, and thus also



delays and lost working hours. Moreover, it can contribute to lowering the dependence on fossil fuels.

A more widespread take-up of cycling can also create new, often local jobs – in sectors such as bicycle manufacturing and retail trade, repairs, and infrastructure construction and maintenance, but also for instance in cycling tourism. Meanwhile, bicycle delivery and courier services have been booming since the start of the pandemic and the restrictions and public health measures put in place, which led to rapid development of e-commerce. Cargo bikes transporting goods or people are more and more part of our daily lives, as well.

However, the surge in cycling has come with its challenges. More needs to be done to ensure cyclists' road safety and avoid accidents. Cyclists' share of total road deaths in the EU stands at 8 % and has been slowly rising. Mobility planning needs to be coordinated, and financing for cycling infrastructure secured. Boosting cycling as an attractive means of transport requires sustained investment in networks of safe and comfortable cycle routes in urban, peri-urban and rural areas across the EU. All levels of government, from local to the EU, need to contribute to this goal.

### **EU action and funding**

Cycling policies are the Member States' responsibility, with each EU country setting up its own regulatory framework. Practical measures (such as developing cycling networks or adapting the public transport network to facilitate combined trips) are taken primarily at local or regional levels, most often in cities.

EU-level intervention consists mainly of promoting cycling, providing financial support, and sharing best practice. The EU has recognised the importance of cycling and its integration in several areas of EU action, such as transport and tourism, energy and environment, regional and cohesion policy, and public health.

Multiple resources support implementation of cycling infrastructure and associated measures; they have been developed at national level or by other interested parties within the EU using EU co-funding. This is true, for instance, for EuroVelo, a European network of currently 17 long-distance cycling routes criss-crossing Europe, under full responsibility of the ECF. The network is in various stages of completion and can be used by both cycling tourists and locals.



Two major EU funding sources can enhance cycling-related developments: the EU structural and investment funds, part of the regular EU budget, and the Recovery



and Resilience Facility (RRF), which aims to address the economic crisis caused by the pandemic. Through the structural funds – particularly the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Cohesion Fund – about €2 billion has been invested in cycling during the EU’s 2014–2020 multiannual financial framework (MFF). The current EU budget –the 2021–2027 MFF – is based on two principles: tackling the health and economic challenges caused by the pandemic and bringing about sustainable transformation to meet the goals of the European Green Deal. The 2021–2027 ERDF and the Cohesion Fund will also support future cycling investments: at least 30 % of the former and 37 % of the latter must be dedicated to climate objectives.

Meanwhile, about half of the national recovery and resilience plans (NRRPs) drawing on the RRF intend to update, upgrade or extend existing national green mobility plans. Quite a few have assigned specific funds to enhance cycling, either as a daily means of transport, or as a sustainable form of tourism, or both. According to the NRRPs, so far, Belgium is the frontrunner as regards cycling infrastructure, with investment worth €411 million (or 6.9 % of the country’s RRF funding) in 180 kilometres of new and 1 360 kilometres of upgraded cycling paths and secured bicycle parking, including at rail stations. Sizeable investments are also planned in Romania, Italy and France.

Furthermore, the EU supports platforms for the exchange of best practice, for instance the City Vitality Sustainability Initiative (CIVITAS), the European Platform on Mobility Management (EPOMM) and the Urban Mobility Observatory (ELTIS), which hosts cycling data.

Legislative work also focuses more and more on promoting cycling. To protect cyclists and other vulnerable road users more effectively, new features have been added to the EU rules on safety requirements for vehicles. For instance, the revised General Safety Regulation, adopted in November 2019, envisages, as of 2022, to improve direct vision for trucks and buses, reducing ‘blind spots’, and install systems at the vehicle’s front and side to detect and warn of vulnerable road users, especially when making turns. The proposal for a revised Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) Regulation, published in December 2021 as part of the ‘efficient and green mobility’ package, can be considered a step forward for cycling in urban areas. It aims, among other things, to establish synergies with other policies, such as those to increase bicycle infrastructure, including the EuroVelo routes.





The TEN-T proposal also highlights the importance of developing multimodal mobility and sustainable transport modes further. The European urban mobility framework, as part of the same package, discusses multimodality and the use of active travel, encouraging cities to draft sustainable urban mobility action plans, as well as promoting bike transport.

### **Why to celebrate the bicycle?**

Regular physical activity of moderate intensity – such as walking, cycling, or doing sports – has significant benefits for health. At all ages, the benefits of being physically active outweigh potential harm, for example through accidents. Some physical activity is better than none. By becoming more active throughout the day in relatively simple ways, people can quite easily achieve the recommended activity levels.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), safe infrastructure for walking and cycling is also a pathway for achieving greater health equity. For the poorest urban sector, who often cannot afford private vehicles, walking and cycling can provide a form of transport while reducing the risk of heart disease, stroke, certain cancers, diabetes, and even death. Accordingly, improved active transport is not only healthy; it is also equitable and cost-effective.

Meeting the needs of people who walk and cycle continues to be a critical part of the mobility solution for helping cities decouple population growth from increased emissions, and to improve air quality and road safety. The COVID-19 pandemic has also led many cities to rethink their transport systems.



### **Cycling and Sustainable development**

World Bicycle Day draws attention to the benefits of using the bicycle — a simple, affordable, clean and environmentally fit sustainable means of transportation. The bicycle contributes to cleaner air and less congestion and makes education, health care and other social services more accessible to the most vulnerable populations. A sustainable transport system that promotes economic growth, reduces inequalities while bolstering the fight against climate change is critical to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Acknowledging the uniqueness, longevity and versatility of the bicycle, which has been in use for two centuries, and that it is a simple, affordable, reliable, clean and environmentally fit sustainable means of transportation, fostering environmental stewardship and health, the UN General Assembly decided to declare 3 June World Bicycle Day.



It encouraged stakeholders to emphasize and advance the use of the bicycle as a means of fostering sustainable development, strengthening education, including physical education, for children and young people, promoting health, preventing disease, promoting tolerance, mutual understanding and respect and facilitating social inclusion and a culture of peace.

The Assembly welcomed initiatives to organize bicycle rides at the national and local levels as a means of strengthening physical and mental health and well-being and developing a culture of cycling in society.

