

Easy, safe and comfortable cycling and walking around the year

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- Increasing winter cycling rates in Scandinavia
- Reduce air and noise pollution from cars
- Better quality of life

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement no. 690699.

Location: Turku, Finland

Organisations involved: [City of Turku](#)
[Turku University of Applied Sciences](#)

What is the solution?

During the winter months, cycling in Turku drops significantly. It (only) reaches about 20-25% of the cycling that is done during the summer months. Increasing winter cycling rates through better maintenance of cycling routes/paths, combined with information campaigns offers good potential for improving the modal split.

The aim of this measure is to increase the year-round flows of cycling and walking by making the available infrastructure easier, safer and more comfortable to use. For this measure, winter maintenance methods will be piloted and a renewal plan for infrastructure improvements drafted.

How does it work?

To reach the goal of year-round high-quality cycling and walking options, a study on available and innovative winter maintenance methods was carried out. Techniques for winter maintenance with the best results for Turku were chosen on the basis of the results of the study. For a pilot route of twelve kilometres, sweep-salting to keep bicycle paths passable during winter was selected for testing. In addition, research into the state of the city's main cycling network was conducted, resulting in a renewal plan for the network and infrastructure improvements.

The improvements to infrastructure-based along the pilot cycling route require some rerouting of cyclists and pedestrians. And different safety measures for bicycle and pedestrian routes located along, or near, construction sites have also been implemented. The latter is a replication of a measure that is currently being implemented by the city of Stockholm (Sweden) also in CIVITAS ECCENTRIC ('Policy for re-routing cyclists during construction work').

This measure also includes constant monitoring of the number of cyclists and pedestrians in the city, to monitor whether the measure achieves its objectives. For this reason, a 'cycling barometer' has also been developed for accurate measurements. During the first year of the pilot phase, the following activities were undertaken:

- A tender process to contract the chosen winter maintenance technique (sweep-salting) of the selected pilot route during winter.
- An information campaign with signposts on streets; news, media coverage and events about cycling in winter to help raise awareness about the issue and motivate people to not put their bikes away in winter.
- Collection of experiences of using the pilot route from members of the public recruited as 'feedback providers', the local cycling association, and through general city feedback, which will be used to improve the measure in the coming years.
- Friction measurement for constant monitoring of the winter route to control that conditions continue to stay safe for cycling and to monitor how well the measure works.
- Analysis of accidents where pedestrians and cyclists are involved, focusing on the winter months. This will enable a better understanding of the impact of winter maintenance and help improve approaches for its deployment.

The city of Turku also plans to try more effective traditional winter maintenance techniques (such as ploughing more often and with high quality) next to the winter cycling test route and sweep-salting. Both methods will be analysed in order to get important comparison material.

In addition, the city of Turku plans to improve the way in which it uses municipal funds for road maintenance and aims to come up with a more cost-efficient way for winter cycling and walking road maintenance, with prioritised networks and corridors, and cost-efficient maintenance methods.

Expected results

The measure is expected to yield the following results:

- Enhanced knowledge in implementing winter maintenance for the city of Turku.
- Increase in cycling and walking as a lifestyle: Cycling done in winter is expected to increase by 30%, and year-round cycling by 15% by 2020, compared to 2016.
- Decrease in traffic accidents.
- Decrease in cyclist and pedestrian injuries (due to slips and falls, etc.).
- More efficient use of funding due to better knowledge and data.
- Increased funding for maintaining cycling and walking infrastructure.

These results will generally lead to improvements in public health, reduce car travel related noise and pollutant emissions, improve air quality and quality of life in the city.

Business model

The measure is funded so that the first year of the pilot is paid through CIVITAS ECCENTRIC. The next year will be funded with a budget allocated by the city of Turku. The total budget of the first pilot year, including preparation work and research work, is around €200,000.

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