PEDALING PATH TO FUTURE
Networks and Clusters

Networks enabling clustering refers to networks or connections that facilitate the formation or concentration of different tourism services, businesses, and stakeholders in specific areas or along routes. Cycling tourism networks utilise clustering to increase efficiency and connections.

Information exchange within tourism clusters is crucial, as different channels facilitate the flow of information among stakeholders. This can happen, for example, by various service providers such as bike rentals, accommodation services, restaurants, and attractions located nearby or forming collaborative networks to offer comprehensive service packages to cyclists.

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Co-funded by the European Union

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Promoting And Building Clusters & Networks

Clusters and networks play a key role in taking cycling tourism to new heights. These interconnected stakeholders in the cycling tourism industry promote collaboration, knowledge sharing, and coordination, thereby fostering the advancement and success of cycling tourism.

Clusters & collaborative networks
To participate in tourism industry clusters and cooperation networks that bring together local companies, tourism operators and authorities can help create synergy and foster collaboration that benefits all parties involved.

Joint marketing campaigns
Clusters can implement joint marketing campaigns in which the attractiveness of the bicycle tourism area is emphasised. Marketing done together can reach a larger audience and improve visibility.

Route networks
Bicycle tourism route networks that connect services and attractions can attract customers to a wider area. It makes planning easier for potential guests.

Training & Knowledge sharing
Clusters and networks can organise training programs and workshops among their members to improve entrepreneurial skills and service quality, and to keep the cost down.

Data Sharing
Create mechanisms for data sharing and collaboration between clusters and networks. This may include information on traveler flows, market trends and best practices.

Legislation & support
Through clusters and networks, you can influence legislation together and get support from local authorities for the development of bicycle tourism.

Environmental sustainability
Together, clusters can strive for sustainable practices and environmentally friendly solutions that are attractive to customers.

Rust in Chains & Recommendations

Transportation network

In remote areas, there are challenges in developing mobility networks, when both public transport and cycling infrastructure are fragmented and poorly integrated.

Tourism and regional developers
- Collaborate with local authorities, public transport operators, and other stakeholders to develop a comprehensive plan that seamlessly integrates public transport and cycling infrastructure.
- Create clear and consistent cycling routes that connect different modes of transportation and provide easily understandable information on route access and navigation.

Seasonal mismatch

There is insufficient coordination between cycling tourism networks and clusters in managing seasonal supply and demand. This can lead to capacity constraints, infrastructure overload and instability in the cycling tourism business.

Tourism developers
- Develop a collaboration forum or network that brings together various cycling tourism networks and clusters.
- Develop a system that enables demand forecasting and management at cycling tourism destinations.

Tourism and regional developers
- Identify and manage capacity constraints and overloads at cycling tourism destinations.
- Share resources and enhance coordination among different stakeholders.

Management

The development of cycling tourism routes is centralised, which may result in rural areas being overlooked. The development operations are fragmented with possible overlaps among different stakeholders.

Tourism and regional developers
- Develop regional cycling tourism strategies and projects that focus specifically on the development of rural areas.
- Establish common strategies and objectives that take the needs and characteristics of different regions into account.
- Recognise and utilise local expertise and knowledge.
- Organise networking events where participants can exchange experiences and learn from each other's best practices.

Description of the Challenge	Recommendation

Financial restriction

Budget cuts and financial challenges may restrict investments in cycling infrastructure and in marketing. This can lead to weaker competitiveness, reduce demand and slow down innovation.

Regional developers
- Evaluate carefully the economic benefits and health advantages that cycling tourism can contribute to in relation to the costs of investment.
- Explore opportunities for partnerships and collaboration with other organisations, such as private sector companies. Collaboration can help in sharing costs and resources.

Tourism and regional developers
- Develop creative financing models, such as crowdfunding, sponsorship, and advertising revenue.
- Seek local support and mobilise local resources and efforts for the development of cycling tourism.

Social acceptance

The resistance of local residents and conflicts with landowners can make it difficult to develop and expand official cycling routes. Lobbying against cycling and regulations also pose obstacles.

Tourism and regional developers
- Engage in open discussions with local residents and landowners regarding the planning and development of cycling routes.
- Develop contractual solutions with landowners, such as lease agreements or land use agreements, to secure access rights to cycling routes and compensate for potential drawbacks.
- Provide transparent and fact-based information about the benefits of cycling and cycling tourism, such as economic revitalisation, increased recreational opportunities, and improved attractiveness of the area.
- Explore ways to share the benefits of cycling tourism with landowners.

Utilisation of resources

Due to inefficient use of resources and difficulties in achieving common goals, regions may lose their opportunities in developing cycling tourism and improving their competitiveness.

Regional and tourism developers
- Establish a common vision to guide resources and efforts towards shared goals.
- Define clear roles and responsibilities for different stakeholders.
- Create forums and events where representatives from different regions and stakeholders can exchange experiences.
- Enhance communication and interaction among different stakeholders.
- Collaborate across borders and with other regions.

B(ik)est Practises

Community Trail Ambassadors Program (CTA)

The purpose of the program is to promote and support the use of local trails. The team of ambassadors consists of community people whose task is to advertise the economic, environmental, and health benefits of selected trails locally to local businesses, citizens, schools, healthcare providers, environmental protection agencies, etc. The program aims to create a positive impact on local outdoor areas and promote a sustainable outdoor culture. The CTA program has been used as an example in the Trail Gazers project. Learn more: https://www.trailgazers.eu/

Closing Remarks & the path forward

This fact sheet is based on the findings of the current state survey conducted within the Sustainable Arctic and Peripheral Biking Tourism (SUB) project. The regions involved are East Lapland - Finland, Region Jämtland Härjedalen - Sweden, Norðurlandi Vestra - Iceland, Donegal County Council- Ireland, and Torshavn, Faroe Islands. The regional data collection included interviews, workshops, and expert knowledge gathering.

Challenges have been identified from the data that emerged from the current state survey. The purpose of the recommendations is to provide ideas that can be further developed for specific purposes. While the state of bicycle tourism varies slightly in each region, this document aims to compile common challenges for all. The recommendations have been compiled by the project's think tank team.

As we look towards the future of cycling tourism, one key concept emerges: the power of networks. Networks that facilitate the clustering of tourism services, businesses, and stakeholders are the backbone of the cycling tourism system. By creating a network of interconnected businesses and organisations, we can leverage numerous advantages. An interconnected approach fosters synergy and collaboration.

Moving forward, the focus should be on strengthening existing networks and creating new connections. A collaborative network ensures a future where cycling tourism thrives through seamless connections and enriched experiences.

By supporting and expanding networks and recognising their crucial role in the success of cycling tourism, we can build a vibrant, sustainable future that benefits local communities, enhances the cycling experience, and promotes a culture of collaboration and cycling.

Photos and graphics: Lapland Material Bank & Canva

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