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Europe's top cycling cities unite to share and inspire excellence in new CIVITAS HANDSHAKE project

Many European towns and cities face alarming levels of congestion, air and noise pollution, and a scarcity of public space: this decreases quality of life and makes urban environments dangerous and inefficient for non-car users to navigate.

Cycling is a powerful way to tackle these problems and transform cities into more sustainable, equitable and economically prosperous places.

CIVITAS Handshake is supporting cities to become cycle-friendly for all by working with three world-renowned “Cycling Capitals” – Amsterdam (the Netherlands), Copenhagen (Denmark), and Munich (Germany). The new project also marks the first time that Copenhagen and Amsterdam have worked together on a cycling project.

Ninna Hedeager Olsen, Mayor of Technical and Environmental Affairs, City of Copenhagen, says, *“If Copenhagen is to be the world’s best city for cyclists, we have to be at the cutting edge so we don’t get left behind. Copenhagen has very good bicycle infrastructure, but when it comes to bicycle parking facilities and handling abandoned bikes, Amsterdam is 10-15 years ahead of us. We need to learn from their best practice. That is why we are part of the Handshake Project – to learn.”*

They will share their expertise and proven cycling solutions with 10 aspiring cities from across the EU: Bordeaux (France), Bruges (Belgium), Cadiz (Spain), Dublin (Ireland), Greater Manchester (UK), Helsinki (Finland), Krakow (Poland), Riga (Latvia), Rome and Turin (Italy).

Three transfer processes foster this empowerment: transition management, novel assessment and evaluation, and immersive study activities. A city-to-city mentoring programme underpins this all. The three “Cycling Capitals” will guide the 10 cities above, known within the project as “Future Cycling Capitals, on their journey to become more cycle-friendly for all.

Over 60 solutions are being deployed across four thematic areas: awareness and education; infrastructure and services; modelling and assessment; planning, regulations, and standards. This will see cities identifying and applying innovative solutions linked to topics as diverse as intelligent transport systems, socio-economic assessments, nudging, communication, governance, and bike lanes, parking and sharing.

Dieter Reiter, Lord Mayor of Munich, comments, *“CIVITAS Handshake enables the City of Munich to take a closer look at cycling policies of other pioneering European cities such as Amsterdam and Copenhagen. Munich has substantial experience in developing marketing campaigns for cycling, which we are pleased to contribute to Handshake’s activities for capacity building. We are delighted to be part of this promising collaboration.”*

By helping to establish the conditions cycling needs to become an everyday, inclusive mode of transport, Handshake will boost cycling's modal share, increase public safety and health,



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encourage more equitable and people-friendly use of public space, and reduce congestion and pollution.

Sharon Dijksma, Deputy Mayor and Transport Alderperson, City of Amsterdam, says, *“Amsterdam is happy to be joining others in Handshake. This European collaboration makes it possible to share and further enrich our knowledge and experience in the field of cycling. With partner cities like Copenhagen and Munich, we can develop and propagate the importance of cycling as a means of transport for cities. For our city, Handshake offers opportunities to experiment with bicycle innovations that can improve the future of our city”*

For more information, visit the project’s website: handshakecycling.eu

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About CIVITAS Handshake

CIVITAS Handshake supports the transfer and uptake of proven cycling measures developed by three pioneering Cycling Capitals - Amsterdam (the Netherlands), Copenhagen (Denmark), and Munich (Germany) - to 10 future Future Cycling Capitals (FCCs).

The ten Future Cycling Capitals and project experts hail from across Europe. They are Bordeaux (France), Bruges (Belgium), Cadiz (Spain), Dublin (Ireland), Greater Manchester (UK), Helsinki (Finland), Krakow (Poland), Riga (Latvia), Rome (Italy) and Turin (Italy).

These cities are drawn from diverse geographical, socioeconomic and planning contexts that will help maximise learning beyond Handshake as the project matures.

Areas of focus include: cycling policy and planning, infrastructure design, modelling and assessment, and awareness and education.

By making urban environments more suitable and enjoyable places for using bikes as an everyday mode of transport, Handshake will help maximise the amount of people cycling, and realise the common goals of managing congestion, improving public safety and health, and making urban environments more liveable.

About the CIVITAS Initiative

CIVITAS is a network of over 320 cities dedicated to cleaner, better transport in Europe and beyond. Starting in 2002, CIVITAS supports three "living labs" projects where a range of sustainable mobility solutions are being implemented and over 10 research projects under the European Commission's Horizon 2020 funding programme. Find out more: civitas.eu