

A national cycling strategy for more and safer cycling

– contributing to a sustainable society and a high quality of life throughout the country

The Government wants to encourage long-term sustainable transport solutions. More and safer cycling can reduce congestion and the environmental impact of travel in built-up areas, and contribute to improved public health.

This national cycling strategy is the first of its kind. It is an expression of the Government's ambitions in the area of cycling, focusing on helping relevant stakeholders to take their responsibility. The strategy is a platform for future endeavours and will be followed up and further developed. Future endeavours are dependent on stakeholders' willingness and ability to play their part.



Illustration: Itziar Castany Ramirez/Government Offices of Sweden

Five fields of action

Highlighting the role of cycling in urban planning

Cycling has become more important in urban planning, but it can be given an even higher priority. It should be possible to shift journeys from cars to bicycles, particularly in and near built-up areas. How we plan our cities and built-up areas has a major impact on movement patterns and choice of transport

mode. Our transport system needs to be developed in tandem with other public services to create conditions that optimise journey and transport accessibility and efficiency, and include cycling as an important alternative. The Government encourages bicycle-friendly municipalities and wants to help spread examples of good practice from

municipalities that have successfully promoted and included cycling in their urban planning. The Government promotes sustainable transport in cities by co-financing infrastructure for public transport and/or cycling, while cities should undertake additional measures that lead to sustainable transport and/or sustainable housing.

Greater focus on various types of cyclists

More information and greater focus is needed on both existing and potential types of cyclists, as is knowledge about the effects of various measures on cycling. Future endeavours should strengthen positive cycling trends and encourage more people to start cycling. The Government wants to improve the conditions for increased physical activity among children and young people through more cycling. Cycling can have a positive impact on access to work, studies and leisure activities. The Government considers that newly arrived immigrants and other groups of foreign-born people may need to learn how to ride a bicycle and gain greater knowledge about traffic rules and appropriate behaviours in various traffic situations. One way of influencing choice of transport mode is by providing information on the advantages of cycling. Sweden has the potential to further develop both tourist and recreational cycling.

Promoting more functional and user-friendly cycling infrastructure

The Government sees the need to develop the network of cycle paths. This means both improving existing infrastructure and creating new bicycle connections. To ensure cycling is an attractive mode of transport, it is important that cycle path networks are connected locally and regionally, linking target points in communities. The Government believes that improved operation and maintenance of cycle path networks are important to encourage

more people to cycle and improve road safety. Cycling infrastructure must also cope with a greater diversity of cyclists. The Government wants to encourage demonstration projects promoting more and safer cycling and it intends to examine the possibility of allowing municipalities to create special cycle streets through an amendment to the Traffic Ordinance. The Government also wants to investigate the possibility of granting an exemption, under certain circumstances, for all vehicle types from the obligation to stop at red lights when the vehicle makes a right turn.

Promoting safe cycling

To increase the attractiveness of cycling as a mode of transport, it must become safer to cycle. The design and maintenance of infrastructure must be adapted to cyclists' needs. Maintenance is critical for safety, as many serious bicycle accidents are caused by slippery or uneven road surfaces. In environments where motorists and cyclists share the road, it is important to adjust basic speed limits as much as possible to ensure that collisions do not lead to death or serious injuries. In September 2016, the Government therefore instructed Transport Analysis, a government agency, to investigate the conditions (including financial and legal conditions) for and consequences of reduced speed limits in built-up areas.

Research and innovation

Research and new knowledge are crucial for future efforts to encourage more and safer cycling. The link between cycling and public health should continue to be a priority area for

development. The Government is positive towards producing, updating and disseminating information about the connection between transport measures and their effects. The Government intends to improve the conditions for monitoring bicycle use. The Government also intends to take a closer look at needs in the field of bicycle research, including how this research can be better coordinated.

Implementation and follow-up

The Government believes it is important to follow up both developments in cycling and the work to encourage more and safer cycling. The Government plans to implement measures that support the focus of this strategy, and will monitor future endeavours.

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