

EuroVelo

European Certification Standard for the European cycle route network

Second revised edition

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Goals, definition and contents

Goals of the European Certification Standard:

- Improve the quality of EuroVelo, the European cycle route network, and other routes by identifying critical deficiencies and motivating decision makers to invest in solutions to the identified problems.
- Motivate different target groups with varying levels of experience to use the certified trans-national routes by providing quality control.

Definitions:

- **EuroVelo** – the European cycle route network – initiated by the European Cyclists’ Federation (ECF) to develop a network of high-quality cycling routes linking all countries in Europe. It can be used by long-distance cycle tourists, as well as by local people making daily journeys.
- **Survey** – the process of collecting and evaluating route data described in this manual. A survey is always required for the certification of EuroVelo routes, but it can also be used outside the EuroVelo network or at an early development stage to identify investment needs.
- **Certification** – confirmation that the route meets criteria set in the European Certification Standard. Only EuroVelo routes in their entirety or their major sections (at least 300 km long, with clearly defined origins and destinations, e.g. major cities or attractions) can be certified. The certification is valid for 5 years.
- **Daily sections** (usually between 30-90 km), **minor sections** (1 km) – basic units of data collection and evaluation.

Certification criteria:

- The criteria are divided into the following categories: infrastructure, services, promotion.
- A differentiation has been made with the criteria based on the fitness level, skills, experience and bicycle of the users:

Criteria level	Cover the needs of...	Need to be fulfilled on...
Essential	Regular cycle tourists, who use bicycle as a main mode of daily transportation and/or frequently for leisure and tourism purposes.	100% of the route
Important	Occasional cycle tourists with little experience and average skills and fitness levels, which use the bicycle for daily transportation and/or have already made several leisure trips.	70% of the route length
Additional	More 'demanding' and 'inexperienced' cycle tourists, including cyclists with special bikes, e.g. road cyclists, cyclists with children in trailers, tandems riders, hand bikers etc.	Optional – depends on the aspiration level

- Data collected during the survey can be used to calculate numeric scores. The scores can be used to monitor route development progress or to compare the route quality with other certification systems, such as ADFC-Qualitätsradrouten. Communication of the score values is optional.

Contents of this document:

- Criteria by route elements: infrastructure, services, promotion.
- Survey methodology for data collection and evaluation.
- Certification process and the communication of the results.

Commented [AB | E1]: NEW: clarification of distinction between survey and certification. Necessary to avoid confusion when a route in planning stage or a route under development is surveyed (e.g. to develop a concrete action plan).

Commented [AB | E2]: Removed the cross-border requirement and reduced the minimum length of section to certify from 1000 to 300 km. We would like to be able to appreciate developments on the EuroVelo network by isolated regions and 300 km is enough for a short cycling holiday.

Commented [AB | E3]: Table to explain criteria levels and their relation to certification requirements instead of bullet list.

Commented [AB | E4]: We introduce some more Important and Additional criteria to have clear requirements and avoid having two parallel systems (criteria vs score requirements). Scoring system becomes optional. Exact wording for discussion with ADFC. Possibility to add interface with other systems.

Traffic category depending on speed and volume of traffic:

- cycling in mixed traffic:

	30 km/h or lower	31 to 50 km/h	51 to 79 km/h	80 km/h or over
1-500 units/day	very low	very low	very low	low
501-2.000 units/day	very low	low	Low	moderate
2.001-4.000 units/day	low	moderate	moderate	high
4.001-10.000 units/day	moderate	high	high	very high
> 10.000 units/day	moderate	very high	very high	very high

- cycle lanes painted on carriageway or asphalted shoulders:

	30 km/h or lower	31 to 50 km/h	51 to 79 km/h	80 km/h or over
1-500 units/day	very low	very low	very low	low
501-2.000 units/day	very low	very low	low	low
2.001-4.000 units/day	very low	very low	low	moderate
4.001-10.000 units/day	very low	low	moderate	high
> 10.000 units/day	low	moderate	high	very high

Maximum share of length of different traffic categories on a daily section to fulfil Essential, Important and Additional criteria:

	traffic-free, cycle paths etc.	traffic				
		very low	low	moderate	high	very high
Essential	no limit	no limit	no limit	no limit	max 50% on a daily section	not allowed
Important	no limit	no limit	no limit	max 50% on a daily section	not allowed	not allowed
Additional	no limit	no limit	max 50% on a daily section	not allowed	not allowed	not allowed

Certification criteria – infrastructure

Continuity:

- ESSENTIAL CRITERION: The route should not contain any physical disruptions that make the route impossible to **travel**. All natural (river, cliff etc.) or artificial (railway, motorway etc.) barriers should be crossed with adequate cycling infrastructure (bridge, ferry, subway etc.) Furthermore, there should be no legal disruptions (i.e. sections where crossing **with** bike or generally entering is forbidden or subject to permissions being granted).
- **IMPORTANT CRITERION: If there are stairs on the route (e.g. to access a bridge), they must have gentle incline and be equipped with ramps or channels.**
- **ADDITIONAL CRITERION: The route shall be free of any disruptions (e.g. stairs, steps, gates or chicanes) that would make it impossible to ride for more “demanding” groups of cyclists (e.g. families with trailers, people with reduced mobility etc.) Cyclists should not be required to dismount.**

Commented [AB | E5]: Previous wording suggested that a route can not be certified at all if a cyclist has to dismount a bike. We propose to allow (some) dismounts on Essential level, but require continuous ride on Additional level (handbikes etc.)

Commented [AB | E6]: Should ramps be obligatory on Essential level? In the long manual specify maximum number of steps or height difference.

Route components:

- Minor sections where cyclists ride on the carriageway are assigned to one of 5 traffic categories: from very low to very high traffic according to the tables on page ... Minor sections where cyclists are physically separated from motor vehicle traffic (cycle paths, cycle and pedestrian paths, greenways etc.) are considered traffic-free.
- Crossings are classified as safe, dangerous or very dangerous, basing on the risk and potential severity of an accident.
- ESSENTIAL CRITERION: The route should not contain **any** sections with very high traffic. No more than 50% of length of a daily section should be classified as high traffic.
- **IMPORTANT CRITERION: The route should not contain any sections with high traffic. No more than 50% of length of a daily section should be classified as moderate traffic. The route should not include any crossings classified as very dangerous.**
- **ADDITIONAL: The route should not contain any minor segments with moderate traffic. No more than 50% of length of a daily section should be classified as low traffic. The route should not include any crossings classified as dangerous.**

Commented [AB | E7]: We want the EuroVelo route to provide consistent standard. Sections with very high traffic should have a public transport contingency.

Surface and width:

- ESSENTIAL CRITERION: The surface should be suitable for use by cyclists with any type of trekking or touring bike in normal weather conditions during the local cycling season. It should be smooth and solid enough to ride, so it should either be asphalted or paved with another resistant material. In exceptional circumstances loose material may be used, but must be consolidated.
- **IMPORTANT CRITERION: At least 50% of any daily section of the route should be as rideable as good asphalted surface.**
- **ADDITIONAL CRITERION: Surface should be as rideable as high-quality asphalt. Width should allow smooth traffic of multitrack bicycles (bikes with two-wheeled trailers, handbikes etc.) in both directions.**

Gradients:

- ESSENTIAL CRITERION: The cumulative elevation gain or loss on a daily section does not exceed 1000 m.
- **IMPORTANT CRITERION: The cumulative elevation gain or loss on a daily section does not exceed 500 m.**
- **ADDITIONAL CRITERION: The cumulative elevation change (gain plus loss) on any minor section (1 km) of the route does not exceed 60 m. No slopes are too steep to ride for the target groups.**

Commented [AB | E8]: This addition fits very well with the ‘70% of route length meeting important criteria’ rule. The route can cross mountains from time to time, but generally should not be 1000 m up or down on every day.

Commented [AB | E9]: Can be detailed in long manual in terms of CROW slope severity (combination of height difference and gradient). Unrealistic to calculate from GPS track (not precise enough), needs to be noted manually in the field.

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Certification criteria – attractiveness, signing and public transport

Attractiveness:

- **ESSENTIAL CRITERION:** There is at least 1 significant cultural or natural attraction on a daily section. This criterion can also be fulfilled by highly attractive landscape.
- **IMPORTANT CRITERION:** No more than 25% of a daily section should expose cyclists to noise, dust, odour or other environmental pollution. There is at least 1 attraction related to the main theme or subtheme of the route on a daily section.
- **ADDITIONAL CRITERION:** No more than 50% of a daily section should lead in a monotonous surrounding. The route should be free of social safety challenges, e.g. fear of crime in urban areas or dangerous situations caused by animals.

Commented [AB | E10]: Varying easiness to meet between routes (e.g. capital route vs coastal). But can be solved with subthemes.

Signing:

- **ESSENTIAL CRITERION:** The route should be signed in line with the relevant national standards (if they exist) and the EuroVelo guidelines (always).
- **IMPORTANT CRITERION:** No signing is missing at main junctions. Signing makes it possible to follow the route by night with standard bicycle lighting (e.g. signs are retroreflective).
- **ADDITIONAL CRITERION:** Confirmation signs or horizontal markings are available after every junction and on long sections without junctions (at least every 5 km). Signs include name and distance to the next main town or destination at least every 15 km.

Public transport:

- **ESSENTIAL CRITERION:** Carrying bikes on public transport to access the route is legally and physically possible at least every 150 km. There should be at least 2 reliable services a day during the local cycle tourism season each carrying a minimum of 2 assembled touring or trekking bikes.
- **IMPORTANT CRITERION:** Carrying bikes on public transport to access the route is legally and physically possible at least every 75 km. There should be at least 6 reliable services a day during the local cycle tourism season each carrying a minimum of 4 assembled touring or trekking bikes.
- **ADDITIONAL CRITERION:** Carrying special bikes (trailers, tandems, hand bikes) on public transport to access the route is legally and physically possible at least every 75 km. There should be at least 6 reliable services a day during the local cycle tourism season carrying a minimum of 4 assembled bikes. It is possible to reserve a space for bike in advance.
- The accessibility of public transport stops and stations considered for the above criteria should meet the continuity criteria on respective level (e.g. if a train station is considered for the additional criterion, platforms should be accessible by ramps or lifts, not only stairs).

Commented [AB | E11]: The definition of reliability and how to calculate number of services (direction etc.) will be clarified in the long manual.

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Certification criteria – services

Accommodation:

- ESSENTIAL CRITERION: Daily section should have at least basic **or average standard** accommodation (simple hotel, home stay, camping etc.)
- IMPORTANT CRITERION: The range of standards on a daily section is not limited to very basic only.
- **ADDITIONAL CRITERION: At least some accommodation is certified as cycling friendly.**

Food, drink and rest areas:

- ESSENTIAL CRITERION: **Food (e.g. shop, café, restaurant, vending machine) and drinking water** on every daily section.
- **ADDITIONAL CRITERION: Food or rest areas available every 15 km. Drinking water available every 15 km.**

Commented [AB | E12]: Removed the option of having only rest stations along the route. In remote areas food can be provided by gas stations, vending machines, homestays, lunch package drop point service etc.

Bike services:

- ESSENTIAL CRITERION: Bike repair workshop, bike shop, **vending machine with spare parts** or self-service station on every daily section.
- IMPORTANT CRITERION: Bike repair workshop **or helpline** on every daily section.
- **ADDITIONAL CRITERION: Bike repair workshop and** pedelec charging stations on every daily section.

Bookable offers:

- **IMPORTANT CRITERION: Daily section is included in at least one cycling holiday offer.**

Commented [AB | E13]: Rephrasing to adapt to the fact that we no longer require the certified section to be transnational.

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Certification criteria – promotion

Web communication:

- ESSENTIAL CRITERION: It is obligatory to provide detailed information about the national and/or regional sections on the national and/or regional level, connected with overview info about the whole route on EuroVelo.com. The content of any national / regional website should be at least information on: the route (including a detailed map), signing, accommodation and public transport connections.
- IMPORTANT CRITERION: The national / regional websites should include interactive maps, points of interests, accommodation databases, integration of public transport timetables and downloads of GPS-tracks.

Commented [AB | E14]: Shorter phrasing.

Print communication:

- ESSENTIAL CRITERION: At least one guidebook or a detailed printed map should be available on the whole route (in one or more publication). The map should be detailed enough to provide proper support for the orientation.

Information along the route:

- IMPORTANT CRITERION: At least one information board or centre along the route on a daily section.

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Methodology:

Steps of the survey:

- The survey should be based on field work and performed by authorised and trained experts traveling by bicycle and documenting the findings.
- The experts should only make use of publicly available resources (websites, public databases, printed documents etc.) to complete information not documented in the field.
- The main aspects of the collected information should be stored in the EuroVelo.org database. More detailed information (if it is collected) should be made available for the relevant stakeholders. The certification report will be published on [EuroVelo.org](https://www.eurovelo.org) website.
- The evaluation of the findings and the certification should follow the current guidelines and the latest version of the annually updated handbook, published on EuroVelo.org.

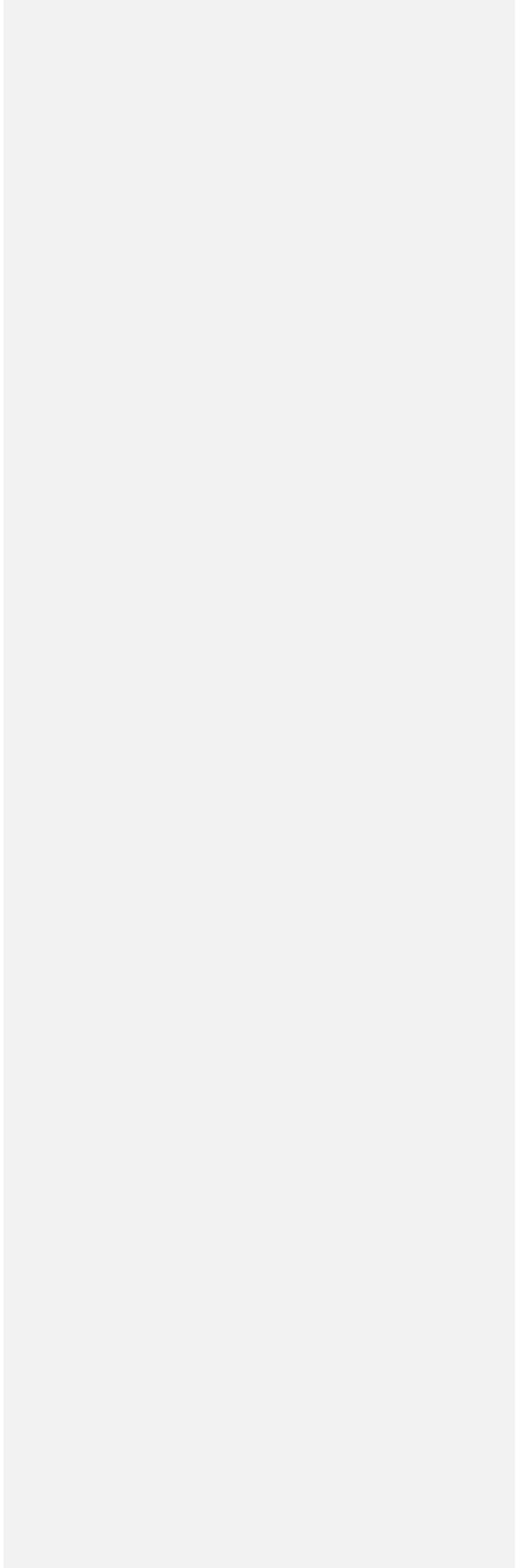
Public transport contingency and alternative itineraries:

- **PUBLIC TRANSPORT CONTINGENCY:** If one or more of the essential criteria is not fulfilled, but the affected section can be substituted by the use of a public transport connection meeting at least the important criteria, the route can still be certified if the public transport option is clearly communicated. This exceptional rule is limited to a total amount of 10% of all certified daily sections of the route.
- **PUBLIC TRANSPORT AS A PART OF THE ROUTE:** If a public transport connection is an integral part of the route (e.g. a ferry to cross the sea), it should also be evaluated against the public transport criteria to determine the daily section certification level, but it does not count towards the limit of 10% of all daily sections.
- **ALTERNATIVE ITINERARIES:** The needs of different target groups covered by the additional criteria can be addressed by alternative itineraries (e.g. one route variant for road cyclists and another for families with children). All variants should fulfil the essential and important criteria and the difference should be clearly communicated.

Commented [AB | E15]: Clarification for coastal or island-hopping routes.

Commented [AB | E16]: A route where you have to choose between a busy national road and a muddy forest track should not be a certified EuroVelo route.

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Certification and communication of the results

Process and roles:

- The certification can only be initiated by a consortium of the relevant partners along the route (National EuroVelo Coordination Centers or Coordinators and their regional / national partners). The request should clearly indicate the itinerary and partners should provide the financing resources.
- The ECF should be informed about the certification process before it commences.
- The certification can only be performed by experts authorised by ECF. A list of authorised experts will be made available on the EuroVelo.org website.
- After data collection and the evaluation is finished the leader of the consortium should submit a request (including all relevant information) to the ECF for the issuing of the official certificate.
- The ECF will issue the certificate either for the whole route **or for its major section**.
- The validity for any certification is 5 years. Within this period the members of the above-mentioned consortium are responsible for updating information relevant on the trans-national level in the EuroVelo.org database. After 5 years the field work should be repeated.

Communication:

- The certification should clearly communicate the geographical coverage of the route.
- All the stakeholders along the route can refer in their communication to the route or **its certified** section in the following way:
 - *"The EuroVelo [Number] - [Official name] is a certified high-quality route within the European cycle route network"* **(whole route)**
 - *"The EuroVelo [Number] - [Official name] between [Start] and [Stop] is a certified high-quality route within the European cycle route network"* **(major section)**
- The certification should clearly communicate the conditions and indicate if there are any limitations regarding the recommended age, fitness level or bicycle needed to ride the route. These restrictions should be communicated per daily section, i.e.

If a daily section or several subsequent daily sections fulfil...	It should be communicated as:
All Essential, Important and Additional criteria	<i>"The section between [start] and [stop] is recommended for all kind of cycle tourists."</i>
All Essential and Important criteria	<i>"The section between [start] and [stop] is recommended for occasional and regular cycle tourists."</i>
All Essential criteria	<i>"The section between [start] and [stop] is recommended for regular cycle tourists only."</i>

- For guidelines on communication of EuroVelo routes that are not certified yet, consult EuroVelo.org.
- The ECF **will** regularly update overview map on the EuroVelo.com website showing which parts of the network are certified.

Commented [AB | E17]: Clarification which communication txt can be used in which case.

Commented [AB | E18]: Added table to clarify relation between criteria met and communication txt.

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The document is also available to view online: www.EuroVelo.org