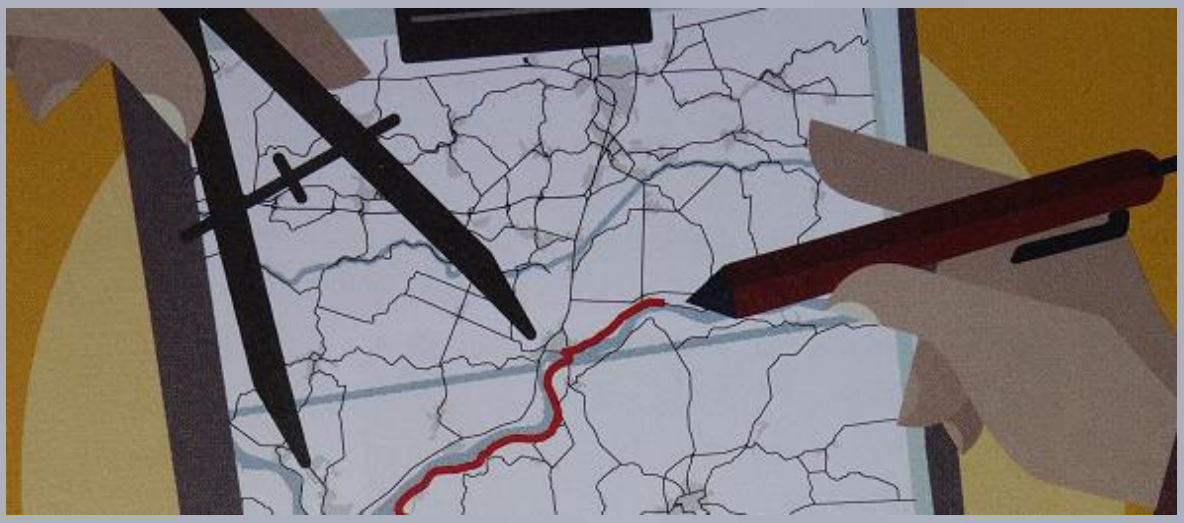
# Italian Cities Cycling Assessment

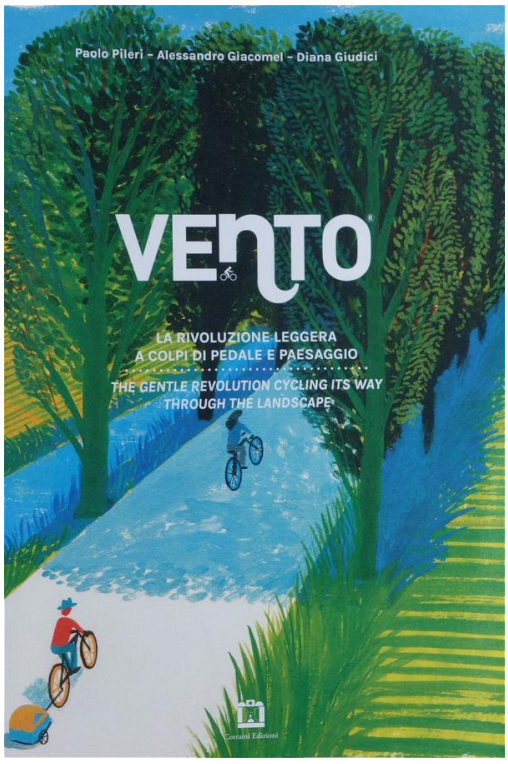


## Report

Final version

DUTCH CYCLING EMBASSY

Final edited version, July 31, 2016 (Dr. Rob van der Bijl, RVDB Urban Planning & GoDutchCycling)

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# Italian Cities Cycling Assessment

## Report

**Dutch Cycling Embassy**

**Compiled by**
**Dr. Rob van der Bijl (GoDutchCycling)**

**Delft/Amsterdam, Netherlands, April 2016**

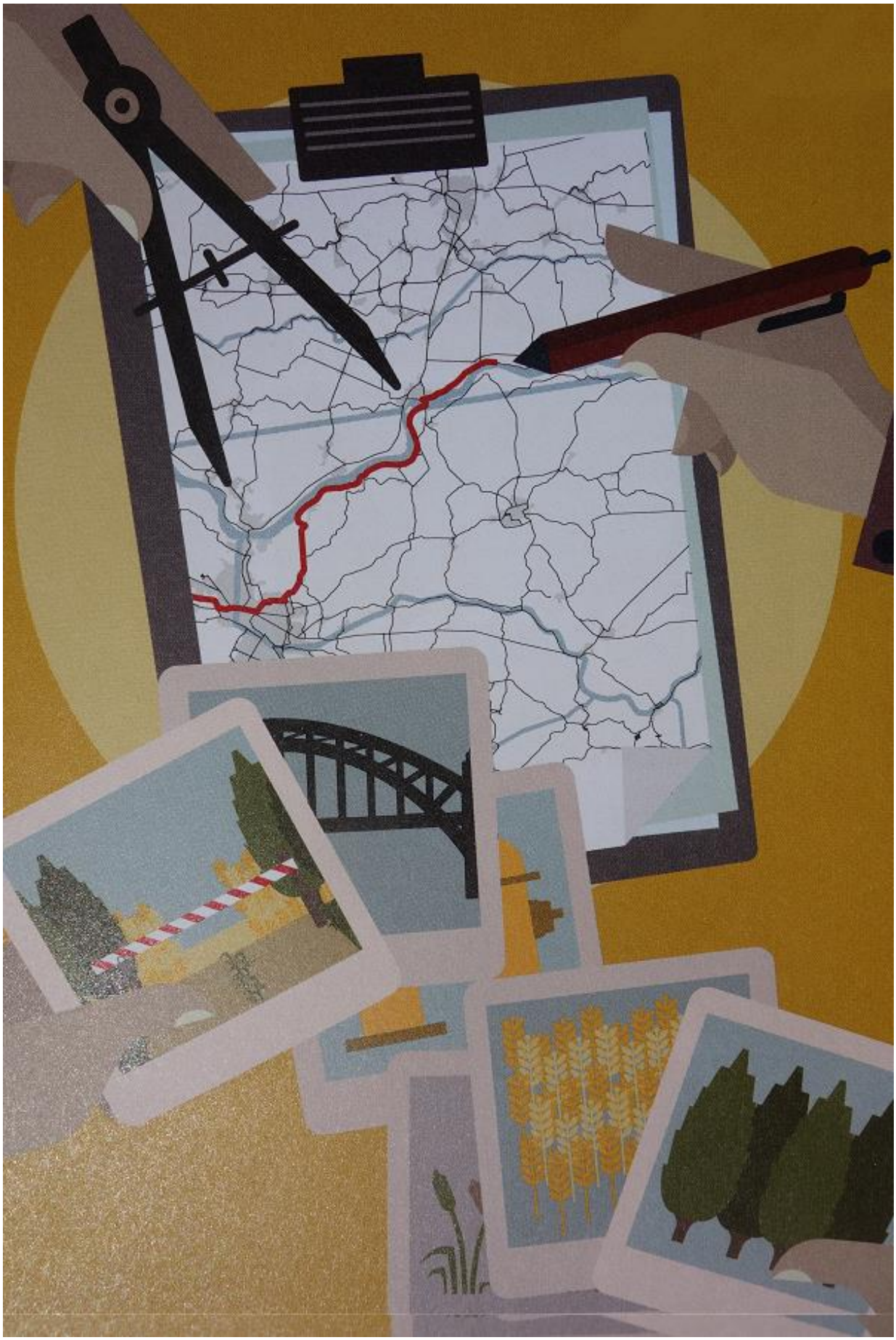
The Italian Cycle Assessment aims to celebrate the Giro 2016 Event and to enhance relationship between Gelderland's entrepreneurs and Italian business. The assessment stages comprehensively state of the art cycling in Italy and focuses on the exemplary city Bari and its region Puglia to reveal the near and promising future of all types of cycling.

The assessment is based upon input gathered with a specially compiled query that is used to indicate the state of the art cycling in a series of selected cities and their regions in Italy. The acquired information has been subject of in-depth analyses by a team of selected experts from both Italy and the Netherlands with different experiences and backgrounds.

The city of Bari and its Region Puglia are selected as exemplary for new developments in Italy. Admittedly the level of cycling in Bari and Puglia hasn't reached yet the level of comparable regions in the north of Italy, however, the experts recognised promising changes in cycling that reflect the rise of a new era.

The assessment project belongs to the 'Cycling Festival Europe 2016' and is one of the activities around the start of the Giro d'Italia in Apeldoorn, Netherlands. The official presentation is at the Giro d'Italia Partnership Day (Nijmegen, Netherlands, April 29, 2016).

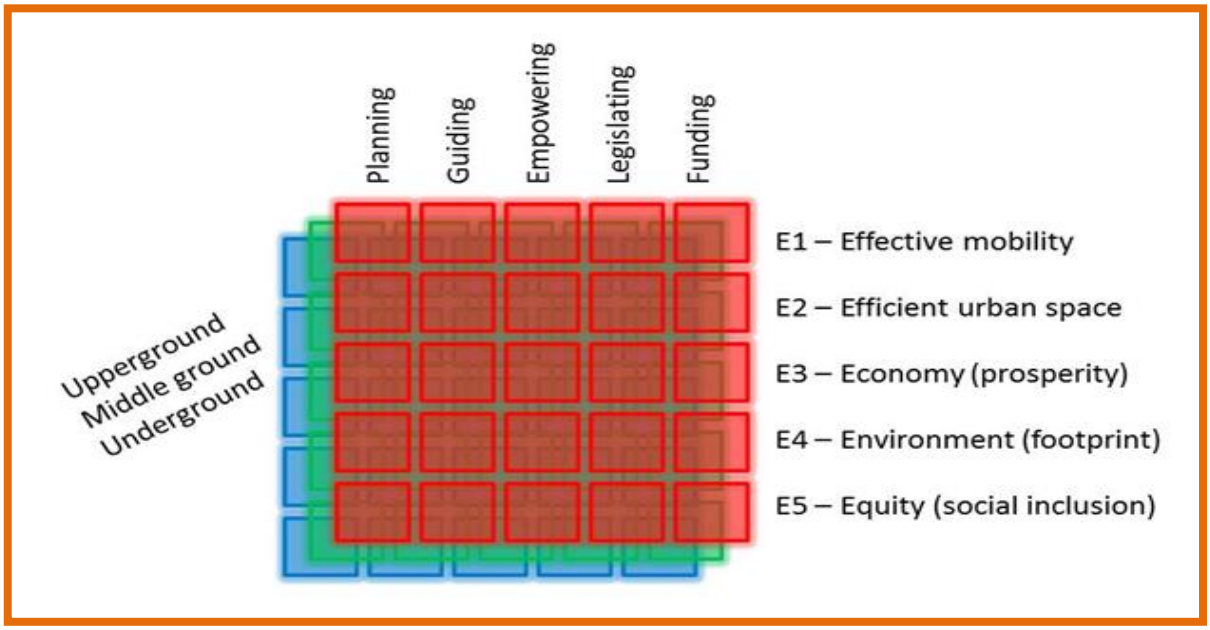
We would like to thank the region Puglia particularly to allow the Dutch Cycling Embassy setting the stage of Italian cycling. Backed by the 'Cycling Festival Europe 2016' this 'Italian Cities Cycling Assessment' and the complementary release of 'The EU Cycling Promotion Guide' mark the start of a series of cycle assessments worldwide, that the Dutch Cycling Embassy wants to initiate in order to enhance and apply Dutch expertise for a world audience.



## Cycle Assessment

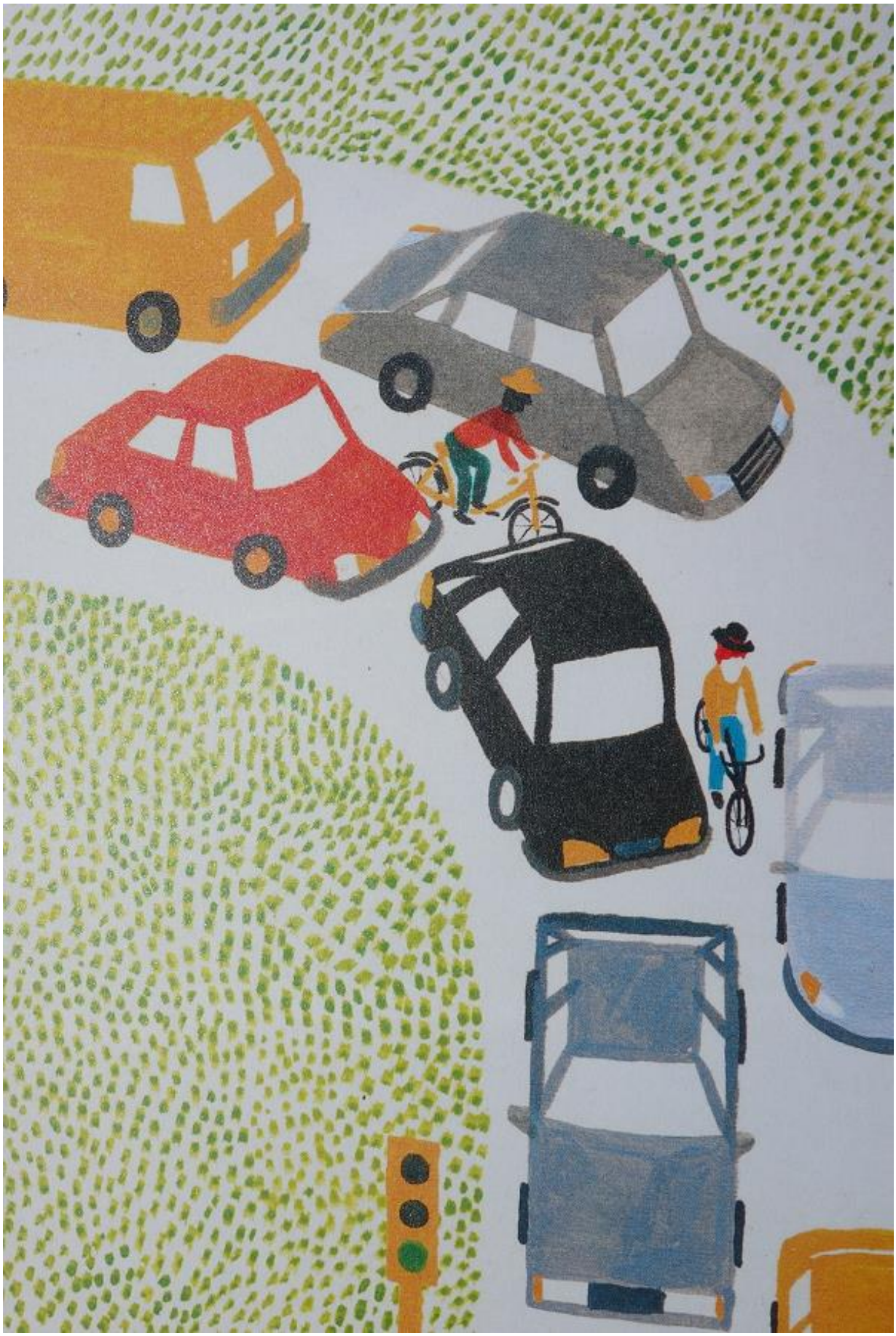
Participants of the Dutch Cycle Community (www.fietscommunity.nl), in co-operation with the Dutch Cycling Embassy, are engaged in the development of a comprehensive model for cycle assessment. The idea to incorporate all relevant themes, required activities and involved stakeholders in one model of analysis. The model can inspire and back the assessment of Italian cycling.

The five cycle themes are: effective mobility, efficient urban space, economy (prosperity), environment (footprint) and equity (social inclusion). In a special matrix these '5E'-themes are cross-linked with official stakeholders (upperground), grass root initiators (underground) and hybrid institutions and agents in between (middle ground), and combined with various activities (planning, research, empowering, legislating and funding). All is summarized in the matrix (see figure).




5E-Matrix – © RVDB Urban Planning / GoDutchCycling, Amsterdam, Netherlands 2015-2016

The assessment of Italian cycling in principle mirrors all fields of the matrix, though as yet the first theme ('effective mobility') has got priority. However all cycle activities (planning, research, empowering, legislating and funding) have been covered at least to some degree. In future research and assessments all stakeholders should be taken into account. But these requires in-depth research in local sources and at local situations in Italy. So far these issues have been covered by interviews with invited experts from Italy.



## The query

Our elaborated assessment model is pragmatically re-framed into the query that entails questions regarding basic information of the state of the art cycling in Italy, and particularly in some featured cities, like Milan, Rome and some smaller cities, including Bari and its region of Puglia. Other issues covered by the query are the use of cycling and the availability of dedicated infrastructure. Also cultural and planning issues have been addressed. The query contains six chapters, in summary as follows.

*1. Basics*

=Number of bicycles per citizen
=Number of dedicated bicycle shops
=Legal traffic status of bicycles

*2. Use*

=Modal split / percentage of cycling
=Average length of bicycle trips
=Kind of bicycle use
=Road safety

*3. Infrastructure*

=Length of dedicated cycle infrastructure
=Number of parking facilities
=Bike sharing system

*4. Culture*

=Helmet use.
=Use of cycling clothing versus regular wear
=Life style

*5. Planning*

=Cycling policies
=Cycling plans
=Cycling budgets
=Other cycling initiatives

*6. Other features and issues*

=Various

The full query is in Appendice 1. The long list of Italian cities is in Appendice 2.

## General results

Cycling in Italy develops positively. Our query and expert sessions recognised the fact that various ways of cycling are evolving, hence, the general results of our assessment reveals a series of positive developments representing the state of the art of cycling in Italy. These developments are summarized below.

A growing consciousness of the Italian cycling history boosts nowadays cycling. The art of cycling building is rediscovered. New craftsmanship emerges, for instance in practices of frame building. A existing shop like Rossignoli in Milan, founded in 1900, symbolises this new development based on historic consciousness.

Best practices inspires decision makers and cycling advocacies, for example in Massarosa. Recently a 'bike to work scheme' is held in this town. Cyclist are payed 25 cents per kilometre travelled, up to a monthly cap of 50 euros (see also 'The EU Cycling Promotion Guide' of the Dutch Cycling Embassy). A second pilot is started in Milan. A national funding program ('Collegato Ambientale 2016') for bike-to-work and bike-to-school initiatives (35 M€) is also started.

A new, young generation of citizens considers the bicycle as 'an intelligent instrument' for their mobility. These new cyclists are not interested in 'owning mobility modes', but in various and attractive ways 'how to move'. Cycling fits perfectly in this new attitude.

A growing number of parents razes their children with cycling. For example: going to school by bicycle becomes a new 'way of communication' and also the main reason for reclaiming safer streets.

New ways of cycling usage emerge. Cycling becomes 'part of family life' or 'new ways of living and mobility' in northern and in southern Italy (e.g. the use of cargo bikes by members of the family). In Milan the use of cargo bikes is booming.

New user cycle groups establishes culturally. For example, citizens using folding bikes label themselves as a 'Brompton family', or food shops identify themselves with delivery by cargo bikes. More than 50 cycle logistics delivery operators are already active in Italian cities.

A growing number of new bicycles shops reflects increasing cycling in Italy. Bike sharing systems get more political attention. Systems are in operation or will be set up in various cities. E-bikes get their share.

Cycle tourism enhances. There is growing awareness of the economic potential of this kind of cycling. A beautiful example of this positive cycle trend is the VENTO project, a cycle route from Venice to Turin running along the River Po, but also the Apulian Aqueduct cycle route, crossing three regions in Southern Italy and supported by a grass roots movements of local companies and associations.

Still challenges remain, such as making Italian people more aware of the full meaning of bikenomics, and particular aware of the real costs of cycling infrastructure and bicycles, including their repair and maintenance. Cheap mountain bikes sold at stores such as supermarkets and DIY stores where the start of a problem that still lingers: these bicycles created a bad, cheap and unreliable image for cycling in general, with uncomfortable positions and no possible use for shopping etc.

Bicycle theft still is a major constraint for future cycle development. Prevention of bicycle theft requires much attention.

## The case of Bari & Puglia

Cycling in Bari city and Puglia region develops positively. Though our query and expert sessions recognised the challenging position of Puglia in southern Italy. In many respects the cycle situation is not yet comparable with its counterparts in the north of Italy. Still our assessment reveals a series of positive developments that mark a real cycle paradigm shift in Bari city and Puglia region. Our proof of this is summarized below.

Thanks to an 'IPA Adriatico' project for the Puglia region a new bicycle parking structure ('Velostation') opened last March in Bari near the main train station. This project definitively marks a new era in the city and region. The facility enhances cycling-based commuting on a larger, regional scale. The project features Bari/Puglia as front runner, since this is the first amenity of its kind in centre-southern Italy. Moreover, 29 additional bicycle parking facilities are planned in Puglia by the 'Implementation Plan' of the 'Regional Transport Plan'.

Thanks to an agreement in 2007 between Puglia region and the (five) railway companies operating within the regional territory, local and regional trains facilitates travelling with bicycles on board, using free passes and dedicated spaces, hence boosting commuter and particularly recreational cycling.

A growing consciousness of the importance of cycling favours future developments in both the city of Bari and the region of Puglia. Cycling advocacies are no longer 'alone', while the number of advocacies increases. During the last year the Mobility Department of Puglia Region organized many meetings and workshops with municipalities, provinces and railway companies of Puglia on bike to work and bike to school campaigns.

Many schools are aware of the importance of cycling. They made cycling subject of their educational programmes and are involved in various cycling activities.

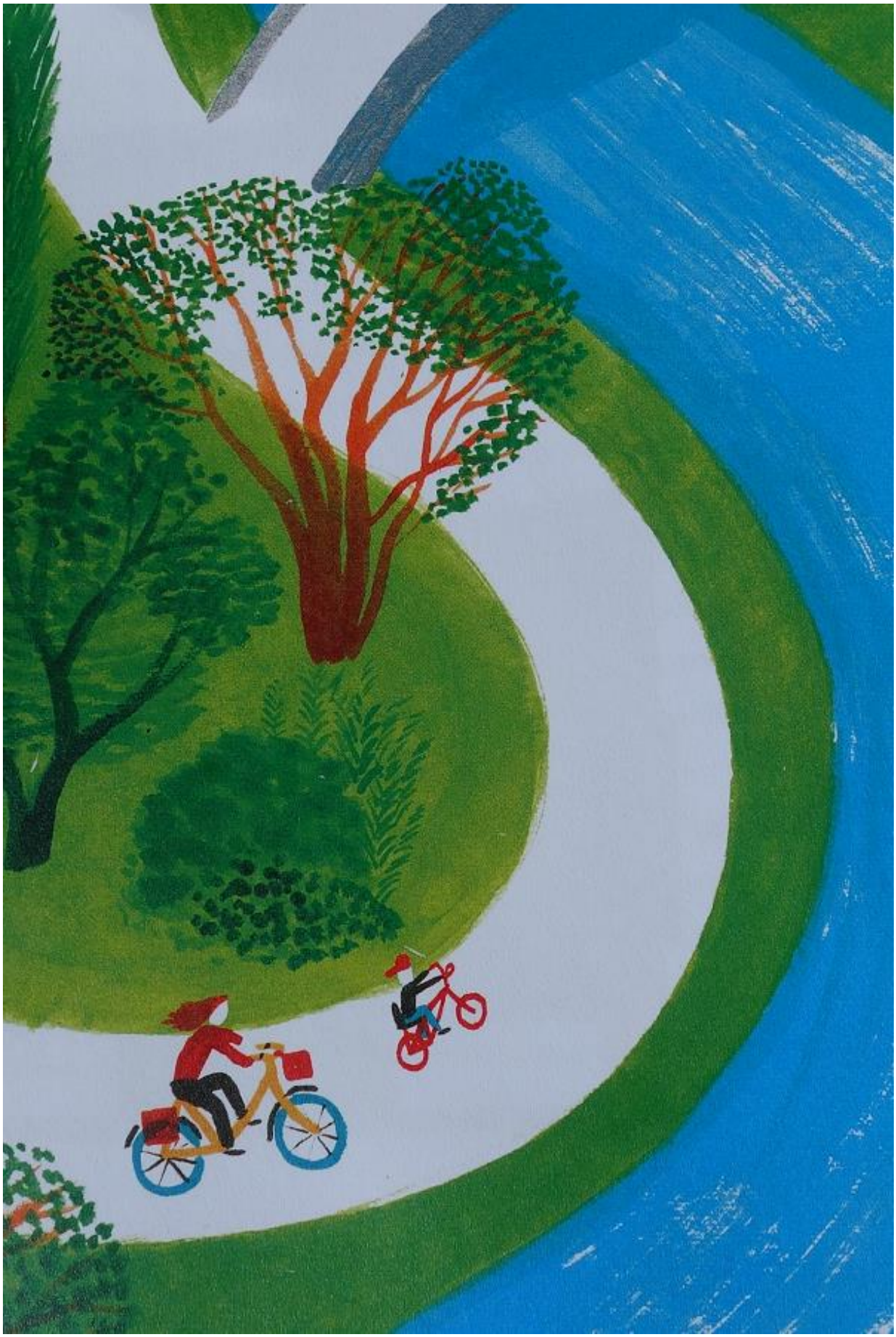
'Veloservice', a small company in Bari (and in Lecce), transports tourists around the old town by rickshaws. Additionally since 2008 a cargobike (Bullit) is used by this company for delivering goods. Moreover Bari and Puglia welcome a growing number of new bicycles shops, including repair facilities.

The city of Bari elaborated cycle policies and plans. The renewed installation of a bike sharing system is scheduled. Later this year Bari welcomes a special cycle market & event.

The accessibility by bicycles of train stations, ports and airports is inserted in the regional law on cycling and in the implementation plan of the regional transport plan.

Regional cycle tourism enhances. Like in other places in Italy there is growing awareness of the economic potential of recreational cycling. An excellent proof of this positive trend is the BOURBON cycle route from Bari to Naples and Bari to Matera (the European Capital of Culture in 2019). Region Puglia published some road-books of long distance cycle routes, including for the Bourbon-route, but also for other routes such us the 'Adriatic Cycle Route in Apulia', that is linked to the BOURBON-route.

Still many challenges remain, such as making car drivers aware of sharing road space with cyclists safely and effectively. Also individual storage of cycling at home stays an important subject, as well as prevention of bicycle theft. Though the recent regional law on cycling obliges all buildings to reserve equipped spaces for the storage of bikes.



## Conclusions

First, the experts want to confirm the positive trends in Italian cycling. In many parts of the country cycling is boosted. Commuting and recreating by bicycle increases. Cargo bikes and e-bikes are more used than ever before.  Cycle culture develops.

Second, the growth of cycling in Italy and particularly the increasing importance of bikenomics represent a serious opportunity for cycle industry, consultants and designers to expand their business.

Third, Bari and Puglia deserve some special attention. The experts recognise promising changes in cycling that reflect the rise of a new era in both city and region. Levels of cycling increase and accordingly the awareness of cycling culture grows, for instance, schools make cycling subject of their educational programmes.

Bari and Puglia work on the extension of cycle infrastructure. Particularly the experts appreciate the IPA-project for a new bicycle parking structure in Bari near the main train station. According the experts this  project justifies special attention for Bari/Puglia as front runner. However safety and bicycle theft stay important subjects to be addressed.

The experts want to underline the importance of the growing cycling consciousness  in both the city of Bari and the region of Puglia. The future looks bright as cycling advocacies are no longer ‘alone’, while the number of advocacies increases. Again, special attention is justified by the fact that during the last year the Mobility Department of Puglia Region organized many  meetings and workshops with municipalities, provinces and railway companies on bike to work and bike to school campaigns. Finally the experts recognised the importance of regional cycle tourism. With the BOURBON cycle route from Bari to Naples Puglia proofs a positive trend in this regard.

The experts feel it’s yet too early to put forward recommendations, let alone advices to Bari and Puglia. The query has proven that cycling already started to enter a mature phase of development. However, the Dutch Cycling Embassy is ready to assist or to support in various ways. First of all the Italian Cycle Assessment marks an enhanced relationship between the Netherlands and Italy in general and entrepreneurs and businesses in particular. The experts are confident that this relationship can nurse mutual benefits in the near future. For now, let’s celebrate the cycle accomplishments of the city of Bari and the region of Puglia!

## Appendice 1 – The query

The query has been processed during a special expert session (Nijmegen, Netherlands, April 2016). Complementary research by DCE's experts and input from Italian experts allow a preliminary overview of cycling in Italy.

Eventually the query has been focused on Bari/Puglia, with the city of Milan as first reference.

### Number of inhabitants (2014)

City of Bari: 327.361
Region of Puglia: 4.090.105
City of Milan: 1.337.155

### Basics

*=Number of bicycles per citizen*
Estimations: Bari 1/1 person, Milan 1/1-2 persons.
*=Number of dedicated bicycle shops*
Estimated 15 dedicated bike shops in city of Bari; Milano much more, estimated 40-50, with last year opening 20 bike shops and this year closing 10 again.
*=Legal traffic status of bicycles*
Is secondary to motorized traffic. Quote: 'our road code is based on cars'.
Generally the code is 'just paper' and not enforced properly in practice.

### Use

*=Modal split / percentage of cycling*
Unknown for Bari, estimated 2-3%; Milano estimated 2-5%; 'From zero to zero' according to one of the Italian experts. However, Italy 6%, according to 'The EU Cycling Promotion Guide' (Dutch Cycling Embassy, April 2016)
*=Average length of bicycle trips*
3-4 km
*=Kind of bicycle use*
Seven types of cycling are recognised: (1) commuting, (2) every day, (3) family oriented, (4) activist oriented, (5) fashion style, (6) recreational, (7) sport
*=Road safety*
In reality cycling is not safe (e.g. double parked cars, and right turning cars). In public perception cycling is considered to be not safe, which is also according the view of our experts. Due to unsafe streets often cyclists use the pavement, which causes conflicts with pedestrians, an issue frequently addressed in the media. Cyclist has no protected status, like in the Netherlands where cars are always liable in case of an accident.
In Milan double row parking is an important issue, and is not maintained by special parking-violation-officers.

### Infrastructure

*=Length of dedicated cycle infrastructure*
About 15 km in Bari ('though fragmented'), estimated for Milan 30-35 km (also fragmented.
'Piste Ciclabili' according 'Velo Love' (Legambiente, Rome, April 2015) Bari 6,1 km; Milan 129 km (according to the 'Milan Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan' (SUMP): 167 km, 77% on roads and 23% in parks and natural areas).

*=Number of parking facilities*
Bari about 150 places at racks, Milan about 2000 places at racks
Bari owns one parking structure at main station.

In home parking is a problem in Bari's dwellings (mostly stored in summer house, for recreational purpose). Situation in Milan varies in this respect (e.g. huge housing blocks with courts and a specific regulation favouring bicycles in buildings). Generally people store bicycles in basements, balconies and courtyards. So there is space to store, but no safe or comfortable place in or around the house.

*=Bike sharing system*
Bari no;  Milan yes ('BikeMI')
Bari used to have a system and now considering re-installation.
One of our experts pointed out that bike sharing systems are not a real solution for everyone, and shouldn't be the only type of bikes in a city: 'cycling is like underwear, maybe you don't want to share it'.

## Culture

*=Helmet use*
Is not an issue in Italy, hence, no usage of helmets.
*=Use of cycling clothing versus regular wear*
Not for everyday cycling.
=Life style
Cycling part of Italian fashion culture. For example, fixies make bicycles into an item for fashion, and also increase the effectiveness of bicycles (light, fast). Notably citizens in Milan start to pay more attention to their bikes, pay for better locks.

## Planning

*=Cycling policies & plans*
Bari got a plan for 180 km infrastructure, and a new bike sharing system
Milan put cycling in mobility plan (SUMP), 230 km newly planned infrastructures.
*=Cycling budgets*
Bari and Milan uses EU-budgets for installing bicycle racks.
However, infrastructure funds are national: local government receive an integral budget for infrastructure, and no specific reservations are made for bicycle infrastructure.
=Other cycling initiatives
FIAB in Milano is addressing improved health for cyclists at the Lombardia region; 90% of the regional budget is reserved for health.

## Other features and issues

*=Other content*
Several issues (see paragraphs above). And more:
Safety goes two ways: unsafe roads and stolen bicycles. Cycle theft is major constraint for higher levels of cycle usages.

## Appendice 2 – The long list of Italian cities

### The big cities

Genova (Genoa), Milano (Milan), Napoli (Naples), Palermo, Roma (Rome) & Torino (Turin).

### Other cities

Bari, Bergamo, Bologna, Brescia, Brindisi, Cagliari, Catania, Chioggia, Ferrara, Firenze (Florence), Foggia, La Spezia, Lecce, Livorno, Mantova, Messina, Modena, Monza, Novara, Padova, Parma, Perugia, Pesaro, Pescara, Pisa, Prato, Reggio di Calabria, Rimini, Sassari, Taranto, Venezia/Mestre (Venice), Verona & Vicenzia.

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**Images compiled from:**
Vento by Paolo Pileri e.o. (2015)

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# Dutch Cycling Embassy

## Sharing know-how, experience and contacts

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The Dutch Cycling Embassy is a comprehensive network of:
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> national and local governments.

**What can we do for you?**
The Dutch Cycling Embassy can put you in touch with its extensive Dutch network. Whether your goals involve research, planning, policy-making, product development, manufacturing, construction or building, we can help you find the best possible partners.

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