

MEDCYCLETOUR Good Practice – Discovering the territory by bike: free of charge bicycle lease

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Your organisation	
Country	Italy
Region	Lombardy
City	Consorzio Oltrepò Mantovano

Organisation in charge of the good practice		
Organisation in charge of this good practice	Consorzio Oltrepò Mantovano	
Location of the organisation in charge:	Country	Italy
	Region	Lombardy
	City	Consorzio Oltrepò Mantovano

Good practice general information	
Title of the practice	Discovering the territory by bike: free of charge bicycle lease
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project?	Yes, two different projects
If yes, what is the name of that project?	Interventi di valorizzazione del patrimonio naturale e culturale del Sistema Parchi Oltrepò Mantovano in attuazione del Piano d'azione della Carta Europea del Turismo Sostenibile - ID 1233 - PIA Oltrepò mantovano ID 11326177 - Reg. CE 1083/2006 - POR Lombardia FESR 2007-2013 - Asse 4; Promozione del turismo sostenibile e dei prodotti tipici – finanziato con la misura 313 GAL Oltrepò Mantovano programma Leader 2007-2013.

Category of the practice	Please select the category of the practice (you can mark the category in bold): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Cycling tourism route infrastructure Cycling-friendly services solutions Solutions for combining bike and public transport Promotion / Marketing Sustainable organisational or financing solutions 	
Geographical scope of the practice	Local	
Location of the practice	Country	Italy
	Region	Lombardy
	City	The Mantuan municipalities near the river Po stretch of the EuroVelo 8 Route

Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	<i>Families and sports cyclists can discover the Oltrepò Mantovano territory by bike with an all-inclusive service: Consorzio Oltrepò Mantovano provides local farmhouses (and also other tourist facilities) with bikes free of charge. Any tourist can rent the bikes for free during their stay in these selected tourist facilities.</i>
Detailed information on the practice	<p><i>The banks of the Po river (partly closed to vehicular traffic) are a natural infrastructure that always allowed trips for leisure, sport or tourism. However, few tourists know the potential of the Oltrepò territory that offers cyclists different itineraries along oases, natural reserves, and small towns. Historical and cultural attractions are easy to reach by bicycle but tourist hospitality is not sufficiently structured to create ad-hoc bike excursions/itineraries promoting cycling mobility. Moreover, small family-run farmhouses often do not have enough funds to invest in cycle tourism services.</i></p> <p><i>To encourage tourists to visit the territory by bike, the Consorzio Oltrepò Mantovano bought 138 custom bicycles in 2013 and distributed them in a free-of-charge lease system to farmhouses, municipalities, and territorial associations that had signed the "Carta dei Servizi del Ciclista" (commitment to offer cycling services). 96 bicycles were purchased thanks to the Sistema Parchi Oltre Mantovano project and 42 bicycles within the Strada del Tartufo Mantovano project.</i></p> <p><i>The bicycles have been provided based on a module of three types (man/woman/child) with a GPS system and three bicycle helmets. The accommodations must provide the bicycles for free to their guests; guests have to provide an identity document and fill in a liability form to relieve the structure from any responsibility regarding bicycle utilisation.</i></p> <p><i>The main stakeholders and beneficiaries of the practice are: cycle tourists, cycling/environmental associations that organize bike trips, local municipalities, restaurants, b&b and farmhouses.</i></p>
Resources needed	<i>The total investment for purchasing 138 bicycles and 138 bike helmets was € 50,000</i>
Timescale (start/end date)	<i>March 2013 – still active</i>
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<i>Many operators appreciated the service. The module was distributed in groups of one (with a GPS system and 3 bicycle helmets) or two (6 with a GPS system and 6 bicycle helmets) to 25 commercial activities (farmhouses, hotels, restaurants) by the Consorzio Oltrepò Mantovano.</i>
Challenges encountered	<i>The main challenge encountered was related to the way the operators could supply the bicycles to the users: The insurance coverage for damage and in case of an accident couldn't be granted by the operators or the Consorzio Oltrepò Mantovano. To avoid complications or to make arrangements with an insurance office, users had to fill in a liability form to discharge the operators from any responsibility.</i>
Potential for learning or transfer	<i>The project encouraged the discovery of the Oltrepò Mantovano territory by bike instead by car and the distribution of 138 identical bicycles increased the visibility of the project creating curiosity. Finally, the project increased the awareness of private operators on the Consorzio Oltrepò Mantovano sustainable mobility choices, improving relationships between operators themselves and between private operators and local governments, working together on the same territorial development project focused on the enhancement of cycle mobility and cycle tourism.</i>
Further information	<p>https://www.sipom.eu/en/la-ciclovia-dei-parchi/</p> <p>https://www.eurovelo8mantova.eu/it/resource/poi/category/poicategory-77/</p>
Keywords related to your practice	<i>Bicycle, GPS system, bike helmets, service, cycle tourism, bike-friendly operators</i>
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