



# RIDE ON

Adventures on two wheels.  
EU commuting turn-around



# - Unlocking the East -

## Youth & Commute Training Course Unveils Its Magic in Igdir, Turkey



From June 7th to 9th, 2023, the enchanting town of Igdir in Eastern Turkey, nestled among the country's easternmost municipalities, played host to an extraordinary training course for front-line youth workers. This captivating event beckoned a group of 15 seasoned youth workers who were ready to embark on a transformative journey of discovery.



For three immersive days in early June, these dedicated individuals dove headfirst into a world where theory and practice converged, offering them the tools they needed to make a lasting impact. The focus? The promotion of bicycle commuting within bustling urban landscapes.



Representing their respective organizations, each group dispatched three eager representatives. These ambassadors were on a quest to acquire not only knowledge and skills but also the attitude necessary to unlock the enchantment of cycling. Their collective mission was clear: to empower their specific target groups to embrace a greener, more cost-effective, and health-sustainable mode of transportation.



The picturesque town of Igdir, with its unique blend of culture and natural beauty, provided the perfect backdrop for this transformative experience.

As these youth workers delved into the intricacies of bicycle commuting, they unearthed a world of possibilities and left with a newfound determination to pave the way for a brighter, more sustainable future.

### A Journey of Exploration and Empowerment: Youth Workers' Training Course Unveiled

The youth workers' training course in Igdir was an immersive blend of theory and practice, enriched by the vibrant local community, expert guidance from seasoned trainers, and innovative non-formal educational methods. It was an experience that transformed participants into dynamic agents of change. Here are some of the workshops that illuminated their path:



# A Journey of Exploration and Empowerment: Youth Workers' Training Course Unveiled

1. Bridging the Gap with Digital Tools: One workshop ingeniously combined field youth work with the power of digital tools, demonstrating innovative ways to engage and connect with the youth.
2. Mentoring and Coaching for Empowerment: Participants delved into mentoring and coaching as potent approaches for uplifting disadvantaged youth, fostering a sense of hope and possibility.
3. Overcoming Barriers: Youth workers confronted the barriers that both they and the youth they serve encounter, working collectively to break down obstacles and open new horizons.
4. Tailoring Tools for Impact: The course explored the adaptation of practical tools to specific target groups, a skill vital for addressing the unique needs of each community.
5. Pedal Power: Bicycle Training for Youth: In a nod to the theme of green transportation, participants engaged in developing bicycle training programs for young enthusiasts, promoting a sustainable and healthy mode of commuting.



In an exciting twist, the participants experienced life as young cyclists themselves, embarking on an open-air adventure through the town of Igdir. The challenge was not only to navigate the streets but also to coexist harmoniously with local drivers. These activities were seamlessly woven together with visits to significant local landmarks, creating a tapestry of cultural exchange and exploration.

Perhaps most importantly, the participants enjoyed precious moments of non-formal bonding with the young volunteers of the hosting organization, AVC. Together, they discovered the untapped potential of the Erasmus+ program, an opportunity that still remains a hidden gem among Turkish youth. The course was a testament to the transformative power of international collaboration, cultural immersion, and the shared enthusiasm for making a difference in the world.



# - Cycling in the Alps -

## A Remarkable Youth Exchange During EU Mobility Week 2023

In the heart of Austria, the charming town of Trofaiach played host to an extraordinary youth exchange event as part of the "Youth & Commute" project, during the EU Mobility Week from the 16th to the 22nd of September 2023. This event brought together 25 young individuals hailing from Sweden, Austria, North Macedonia, Bulgaria, and Turkey, all eager to explore the advantages of bicycle commuting through the lens of non-formal education.



Amidst the breathtaking backdrop of the Austrian Alps, these participants delved into a rich tapestry of knowledge and skills related to green transportation. Immersed in the vibrant cultural exchange, they collaborated with their peers from diverse corners of the globe, forging lasting connections.

Throughout the exchange, participants rejoiced in the spirit of Mobility Week with an array of cycling-focused educational activities. They also reveled in intercultural evenings, fostering a deeper appreciation for the diverse backgrounds and traditions represented. And, of course, the pristine natural beauty of the Alps served as the perfect backdrop to this enlightening experience.



## Parade of Memorable Moments: Youth Exchange Highlights

The "Youth & Commute" exchange in Trofaiach unfolded as a tapestry of unforgettable moments, each contributing to a vibrant mosaic of experiences:

### 1. Crafting a Mobile Bike Station

With creativity and teamwork, the participants came together to create a mobile bike station in a local park. This project not only showcased their ingenuity but also left a lasting legacy for the community.



### 2. Bike Repair Bonding

The exchange participants bonded over shared interests as they worked hand in hand to fix bicycles. This hands-on experience not only strengthened their technical skills but also forged new friendships.



### 3. A Special Visit from the Mayor

Trofaiach's Mayor paid a visit, extending a warm welcome and unveiling their city's commitment to bolstering cycling infrastructure for daily commuters. This presentation served as a testament to the town's dedication to sustainable transportation.





Youth & Commute

#### 4. Pedaling in Unity:

The exchange took a thrilling turn as the group embarked on a collective cycling journey to Leoben. It was a ride marked not only by scenic beauty but also by the sense of camaraderie that only a shared adventure can create.



#### 5. Triumph of Learning:

Amidst all the excitement, a heartwarming milestone was achieved when one young girl learned to cycle for the first time. Her triumphant journey exemplified the spirit of growth and discovery that encapsulated the entire exchange.

These highlights painted a vivid picture of the "Youth & Commute" exchange in Trofaiach, where knowledge, friendship, and the joy of cycling intermingled to create lasting memories. It was an experience that transcended borders and left an indelible mark on all who participated.







Youth & Commute

## Unlocking Sustainable Urban Mobility: European Mobility Week

The European Mobility Week, a flagship campaign by the European Commission, stands as a beacon of awareness and change in the realm of sustainable urban mobility. This transformative initiative champions a shift in behavior towards active mobility, public transportation, and innovative, eco-friendly transport solutions.

The main spectacle unfolds **annually from September 16th to 22nd**, culminating in the widely celebrated Car-Free Day. During this pivotal week, local authorities are urged to embrace innovative planning measures, champion new infrastructure and technologies, assess air quality, and actively engage with the public to elicit valuable feedback. The European Mobility Week continues to gain momentum, with an increasing number of towns and cities joining the movement each year. Its massive media appeal, coupled with its far-reaching impact, makes it a driving force in the push for sustainable urban mobility, not just in Europe but across the globe.



During this week of inspiration, nearly 3,000 towns and cities unite to cultivate behavioral change. They promote active mobility, foster the use of public transportation, and explore a gamut of intelligent, clean transport solutions. These efforts are brought to life through a plethora of awareness-raising activities and events in collaboration with local stakeholders.



For the year 2023, the campaign has rallied around the theme of 'Save Energy,' a timely reminder of the collective responsibility to conserve resources while paving the way for a brighter, more sustainable urban future. Stay tuned as we journey through the inspiring tales and transformative endeavors that mark this year's European Mobility Week.





## EU Pledges Support for Cycling with Landmark Declaration

EU Transport Commissioner Adina Vălean made a significant announcement on October 4th, launching the **European Declaration on Cycling at the Urban Mobility Days in Seville**. This declaration underscores Brussels' strong commitment to promoting cycling as a sustainable mode of transport.

The declaration promises increased funding and political backing for cycling, aiming to boost both its popularity and the EU's bicycle industry. Commissioner Vălean emphasized the potential to enhance cyclist safety and stimulate job growth, particularly in training and cycling tourism. Notably, bicycle production within the EU surged by 29% in 2022, reaching 14.7 million units.

Containing thirty-six key principles, the declaration serves as a foundation for future legislation. These principles encompass improving cycling infrastructure, expanding investments in cycling, nurturing a world-class bicycle manufacturing sector, promoting two-wheel tourism, and enhancing data collection on cycling.



While not legally binding, the declaration elevates cycling to the status of a European concern rather than merely a local or regional issue. It empowers local and national advocates to push for pro-cycling legislation in their respective member states. Furthermore, this development opens doors for cycling in EU laws and encourages governments to uphold their cycling commitments. This leverage is particularly vital in regions where investment in cycling infrastructure lags behind other transportation priorities.

In the short term, advocates hope the declaration will lead to increased investment in cycling, potentially tapping into EU funding instruments such as the Social Climate Fund, the European Regional Development Fund, and the Cohesion Fund. The cycling industry has warmly welcomed this groundbreaking declaration, heralding it as a momentous step toward a greener, healthier, and more sustainable future for European transportation.



Youth & Commute



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