

BALTIC BIKING UPGRADE (BBU)

Small and medium-sized enterprises' bicycle-friendly offers and services along EuroVelo 10 in the South Baltic Area

Analysis and mapping report
December 2024

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Executive summary:

The Baltic Biking UPGRADE (BBU) project addresses key challenges facing small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) along the EuroVelo 10 route in the South Baltic Area (SBA), encompassing Poland, Lithuania, Sweden, Denmark, and Germany. This executive summary outlines the project's focus on enhancing bike tourism infrastructure, fostering cross-border collaboration, and supporting SMEs in creating attractive, bookable services for both local and international cycling tourists.

Context and Objectives

BBU aims to position the EuroVelo10 route as a premier cycling destination by addressing barriers that limit the capacity of SMEs to attract foreign visitors and provide high-quality, bike-friendly services. Major obstacles include underdeveloped infrastructure, limited digital marketing capacity, and insufficient cross-border partnerships. To address these issues, an overview of existing cycle tourism companies around the EuroVelo10 in the South Baltic Area was created in WP3, Activity 3.1. by mapping the SME's bicycle-friendly offers and services. The overview has formed the background for this report, which is Deliverable 3.1. in WP3 coordinated by PP3, Visit Lolland-Falster, Denmark.

Key findings from analysis and mapping

1. **Service distribution and gaps:** Across the five partner countries, bicycle-friendly services are unevenly distributed. Key services like accommodations, bike rentals, repair stations, and rest areas are concentrated in certain regions, leaving other areas underserved. This patchy distribution results in inconsistent experiences for cyclists.
2. **SME challenges:** SMEs along the EuroVelo10 face several challenges:
 - **Limited market reach:** Many lack digital marketing skills and booking platforms, which limits their appeal to international tourists. However, not all SMEs, including tour operators, see the need for increased promotion on the internet as they already have enough customers.
 - **Seasonal demand:** Heavy reliance on peak-season tourism reduces revenue stability.
 - **Fragmented collaboration:** Cross-border coordination is lacking, resulting in inconsistent service standards and missed opportunities for joint marketing.
3. **Tourist needs and preferences:** Cycling tourists increasingly seek sustainable travel options, seamless digital booking, and themed experiences. Demand is growing for guided tours, cultural packages, and family-friendly services, particularly among international visitors.

Recommendations for addressing challenges

1. **Enhanced infrastructure and amenities:** Investment in core infrastructure, including safe bike paths, repair stations, charging points, and clear signage, is crucial. Consistent, cyclist-friendly facilities across borders will ensure a safer and more enjoyable experience for tourists.
2. **Digital and Marketing Initiatives:** In WP4, deliverable 4.2. The EuroVelo10 website (EN) & 5 national/regional websites will be updated on EuroVelo10 bicycle-friendly SMEs offers in Poland, Denmark, Sweden, Germany and Lithuania. This will streamline planning for tourists and expand the reach of local SMEs. Training SMEs in digital marketing and social media will further boost visibility.
3. **Cross-Border certification and branding:** Introducing a “Cyclist-Friendly” certification standard across the South Baltic region would provide assurance to tourists and set quality benchmarks. A unified marketing campaign highlighting the EuroVelo10’s scenic, eco-friendly, and cultural appeal can build a strong regional brand, which is a foreseen activity in WP4 *“Joint marketing of the Baltic Sea Cycle Route on foreign and domestic markets.”*
4. **Sustainable tourism practices:** Encouraging SMEs to adopt sustainable practices, such as eco-friendly accommodations and waste reduction, will appeal to the increasing number of environmentally conscious tourists and support the region’s long-term environmental goals.

Benefits for SMEs and tourists

- **For SMEs:** Expanding market reach, consistent standards, and year-round service packages will increase competitiveness and revenue stability.
- **For Cyclists:** Improved infrastructure, easier access to information and booking, and the availability of sustainable options will enhance the overall cycling experience along EuroVelo10.

Conclusion

The BBU project’s analysis underscores a significant opportunity to transform the EuroVelo10 into a top-tier cycling destination. Through strategic investments in infrastructure, digital tools, cross-border partnerships, and sustainable tourism practices, EuroVelo10 can achieve greater appeal, supporting both the regional economy and the global reputation of the Baltic Sea Cycle Route. Further, in the EUROPEAN DECLARATION on CYCLING it reads: *“Cycling is also a key enabler of sustainable tourism and contributes to connectivity within and between rural and urban areas, especially in combination with trains, buses and other modes to create multimodal mobility services. It brings tangible benefits to the local economy, in particular to SMEs.”*¹

¹ EUROPEAN DECLARATION ON CYCLING, EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 2023 [HTTPS://TRANSPORT.EC.EUROPA.EU/SYSTEM/FILES/2023-11/EUROPEAN_DECLARATION_ON_CYCLING_EN_0.PDF](https://transport.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-11/EUROPEAN_DECLARATION_ON_CYCLING_EN_0.PDF)

1. Introduction

1.1. Background and context of the analysis

Baltic Biking UPGRADE (BBU)² will address the significant challenges of SMEs along the South Baltic part of the Baltic Sea Cycle Route – EuroVelo10 when the SMEs in the partners’ subregions/counties/districts/area in table 1. below are to create attractive bookable offers and successfully reach out to foreign markets.

COUNTRY	REGIONS	SUBREGIONS/COUNTIES/ DISTRICTS/AREA
POLAND	POMORSKIE	Gdańsk
POLAND	ZACHODNIO POMORSKIE	Szczecin
LITHUANIA	LIETUVA	Klaipėdos apskritis
SWEDEN	SYDSVERIGE	Blekinge län
SWEDEN	SYDSVERIGE	Skåne län
DENMARK	SJÆLLAND	Vest-og Sydsjælland/Lolland-Falster
GERMANY	MECKLENBURG-VORPOMMERN	Vorpommern-Rügen

Table 1. Regions in which the survey for the mapping took place.

BBU, which began in October 2023 and will run until September 2026, is led by Pomorskie Tourist Board and involves 6 countries – 5 being along the South Baltic part (Poland, Lithuania, Sweden, Denmark, Germany) of EuroVelo 10, and Belgium as European Cyclists’ Federation, ECF is based in Brussels. These five South Baltic countries cover more than 4,900 km of the route, out of a total of more than 9,000 km, more than half of the route, though it should be mentioned that due to the geography the partners in BBU only covers part of the 4,900 km.

Project partners of BBU are:

- [Pomorskie Tourist Board](#), Poland (Lead Partners)
- [Westpomerania Regional Tourism Organisation](#), Poland
- [Visit Lolland-Falster](#), Denmark
- Danish Cycling Tourism, [Dansk Cykelturisme](#), Denmark
- [Klaipėda Region Association](#), Lithuania
- [Region Blekinge](#), Sweden
- Swedish Cycling Advocacy Organisation, [Cykelfrämjandet](#), Sweden
- [City of Barth](#), Germany
- [European Cyclists' Federation](#), ECF, Belgium

² https://pro.eurovelo.com/projects/2023-09-21_baltic-biking-upgrade

Associated partners are:

- [Pomorskie Voivodeship](#), Poland
- [Zachodniopomorskie Voivodeship](#), Poland
- [Polish Tourism Organisation](#), Poland
- [Warmia and Masuria Tourist Board](#), Poland
- [Visit Denmark](#), Denmark
- [Finnish Cyclists' Federation / The Finnish Center for Cycling Tourism](#), Finland
- [Citybike Ltd.](#), Estonia
- [Vidzeme Tourism Organisation](#), Latvia
- [Larsson Bike](#), Denmark
- [Jan-Pol](#), Poland
- [JSC Baltic Bike Travel](#), Lithuania

The challenges faced by the SMEs are mainly due to a lack of knowledge, underdeveloped bicycle-friendly standards, services & offer & a lack of business contacts and partnerships with relevant peers, and a shortage of business networks and partnerships, particularly on an international scale.

Further, in the forerunner to BBU, the Vision of the Baltic Sea Cycle Route EuroVelo 10³ in its development strategy 2020-2030, it reads: *“Public and private initiatives and projects are realized to create complex, competitive, profitable, and innovative cycle tourism offerings. That will result in the increasing number of cyclists and increasing economic impact to the local communities in the Baltic Sea coast. Professional B2B and B2C marketing campaigns, regional, national and transnational websites, social media channels, and tourism information offices provide excellent product visibility to the market. Up-to-date, complex information about the whole route and the route attractions, sections, regions, and bookable offers are also provided.”*

Additionally, in the Interreg South Baltic *Bike across the Baltic* (BAB)⁴ project *“will address the lack of trans-Baltic cooperation amongst regions and transport and tourism stakeholders by strengthening public authorities' organizational capacity to develop and improve the EuroVelo 10.*

The project aims to develop the EuroVelo 10 cycling route running through all nine countries in the Baltic Sea region. The project focuses on chosen route sections in the project partner countries Estonia, Finland, Poland and Sweden.”

Also, the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) Policy Area Tourism⁵ *aims to reinforce the Baltic Sea Region's cohesiveness through tourism. PA Tourism's actions include facilitating networking and clustering of tourism stakeholders, strengthening their tourism-related project initiatives and activities.*

Finally, in the European Declaration on Cycling from 2024 The European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission solemnly proclaim: *Creating favorable conditions to support cycling as a*

³ Baltic Sea Cycle Route EuroVelo 10, Interreg South Baltic

<https://southbaltic.eu/documents/18165/434178/Del+3.3.+Euro+Velo+10+Development+Strategy.pdf/1c6b1dd3-435d-4d32-8afe-5855b8c2e15e>

⁴ Bike across the Baltic (BAB Interreg South Baltic, <https://interreg-baltic.eu/project/bab/>)

⁵ Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) Policy Area Tourism, <https://eusbsr.eu/policy-area-tourism/>

*sustainable means of recreation and tourism*⁶. Also, the UN Tourism sees cycling tourism as an important part of transition towards a more sustainable transition⁷.

EuroVelo 10 is part of the European cycle route network in fig. 1 below – 17 long-distance cycle routes that cross and connect the continent. It is the largest cycle route network in the world, spanning over 90,000 km when completed. EuroVelo is developed and coordinated on the transnational level by the [European Cyclists' Federation \(ECF\)](#) in cooperation with a network of [National EuroVelo Coordination Centres \(NECCs\)](#)⁸.



Fig.1. The EuroVelo cycle route network. EuroVelo 10 and 13 overlaps on the Baltic Sea coast. EuroVelo 7 and 9 cross EuroVelo10 in Rostock, Germany and in Gdansk, Poland, respectively.

⁶ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=OJ:C_202402377

⁷ The Memorandum of Understanding between the European Cyclists' Federation and World Tourism Organization (UN Tourism) 2024, https://pro.eurovelo.com/news/2024-02-08_ecf-and-un-tourism-renew-their-cooperation-for-more-cycling-tourism-in-europe

⁸ <https://pro.eurovelo.com/download/document/2024-EuroVelo-New-Routes&Major-Extensions-Manual.pdf>

When in fig. 2 below. following the EuroVelo10 coastline of the Baltic Sea, it will take you to in beaches, cliffs, woodland, ports and marinas as well as thousands of islands large and small. It passes through the different cultures that have grown up along the shores.



Fig 2. EuroVelo 10 is over 9000 km long and covers 9 countries⁹. Together the five countries cover 4,900 km of the EuroVelo 10 route¹⁰.

⁹ <https://en.eurovelo.com/ev10>

¹⁰ https://pro.eurovelo.com/projects/2023-09-21_baltic-biking-upgrade

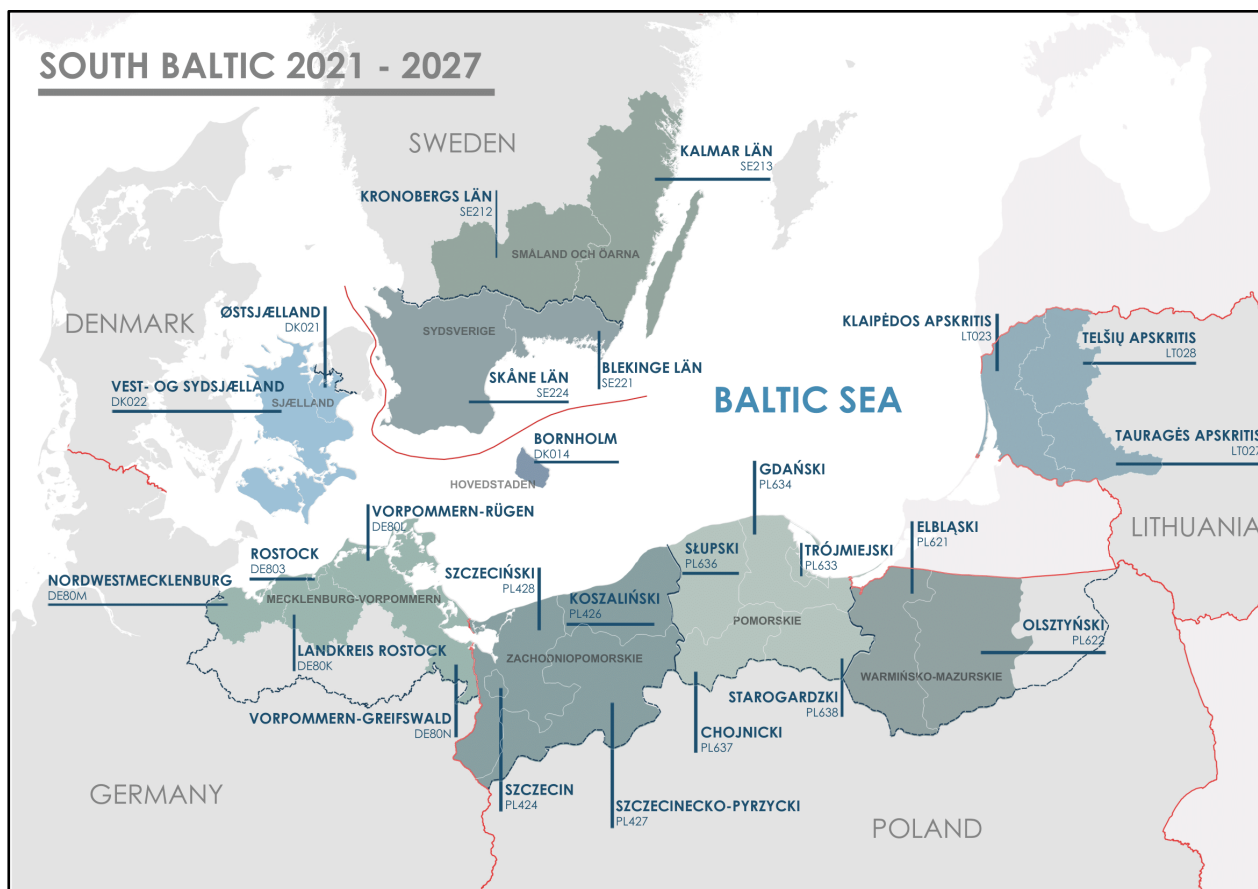


Fig. 3. The coastal regions of 5 EU Member States define the South Baltic Programme area.

The primary aim of BBU is to support the SMEs along the EuroVelo 10 route by tackling these significant challenges and provide training, a guide for businesses, and a marketing campaign to promote the new offers. Finally, BBU will encourage SMEs to join the South Baltic EuroVelo10 network, fostering greater collaboration and connectivity.

Ultimately, BBU aspires to enhance the overall cycling experience along EuroVelo 10 through improved services, innovative products, and heightened visibility in the international cycling tourism market. This ambition will be achieved through strengthened cross-border cooperation and shared expertise.

Thus, among the planned activities in WP3 the A3.1 *Creating an overview of existing cycle tourism companies around the EuroVelo10 in the South Baltic area - mapping tour operators, services providers etc.* leading to delivery D3.1. and this report.

Further, it is the ambition that the report together with the pilot activities will inspire the BBU partners and other relevant stakeholders in creating new EuroVelo10 tours and offers for customers. Also, it is recommended the report be embedded in *Deliverable 3.3. Manual on how to create new EuroVelo10 bicycle-friendly services, improve SMEs offers.*

A EuroVelo 10 multi stakeholder platform will be created to support and sustain cooperation between stakeholders after the project ends. It will be a platform for promotion, networking, business opportunities and knowledge exchange.¹¹

¹¹ https://pro.eurovelo.com/projects/2023-09-21_baltic-biking-upgrade

1.2. Objectives of the analysis and mapping activity

For this activity, all five partner countries were asked to contribute to the overview of the SMEs existing bicycle-friendly services along EuroVelo10 in their respective countries via a survey. The survey's ten questions below are related to the SMEs' offers and services (e.g., bike rentals, guided tours, accommodations etc.)

1.2.1. Identification of cycle tourism companies:

- 1.2.1.1. Which companies in the South Baltic area (in your region) are currently offering cycle tourism services along the EuroVelo10 route? Name min. 10
- 1.2.1.2. What types of services do these companies provide? (e.g., bike rentals, guided tours, accommodations) Name min. 10
- 1.2.1.3. How long have these companies been in operation?

1.2.2. Geographical presence:

- 1.2.2.1. Where are these cycle tourism companies located along the EuroVelo10 route in the South Baltic area?
- 1.2.2.2. Are there specific regions or cities with a higher concentration of cycle tourism services?

1.2.3. Infrastructure and facilities:

- 1.2.3.1. What infrastructure and facilities do these companies have to support Cycle tourism? (e.g., bike rental stations, repair services, information centres)
- 1.2.3.2. What are the needs for the EuroVelo10 route development listed by these companies?
- 1.2.3.3. Are there dedicated cycling paths or routes associated with these Companies

1.2.4. Target customer demographics:

- 1.2.4.1. Who are the primary target customers of these cycle tourism companies? (e.g., residents, domestic tourists, international tourists); give some characteristics
- 1.2.4.2. Are there specific age groups or interests these companies cater to and What type of offer do they have for these groups?

1.2.5. Collaborations and partnerships:

- 1.2.5.1. Are there any collaborations or partnerships between cycle tourism companies and other stakeholders? (e.g., local businesses, tourism boards, transportation providers) If yes, please provide info and give examples
- 1.2.5.2. How do these collaborations contribute to the overall cycling tourism experience?

1.2.6. Technology adoption:

- 1.2.6.1. To what extent do these companies leverage technology in their services? (e.g., online booking platforms, mobile apps, GPS navigation)
- 1.2.6.2. How do they use technology to enhance the customer experience?

1.2.7. Challenges and opportunities:

- 1.2.7.1. What challenges do these cycle tourism companies face in the current market?
- 1.2.7.2. Are there any emerging opportunities or trends that they are capitalizing on?

1.2.8. Sustainability practices:

- 1.2.8.1. To what extent do these companies incorporate sustainable practices in their operations? (e.g., eco-friendly initiatives, waste reduction, community engagement)
- 1.2.8.2. How important is sustainability in their value proposition?

1.2.9. Customer feedback and reviews:

- 1.2.9.1. What do customers say about the cycle tourism services offered by these companies? (Check online reviews, testimonials, and feedback)
- 1.2.9.2. Are there common themes or areas for improvement mentioned by customers?

1.2.10. Competitive landscape:

- 1.2.10.1. Who are the main competitors for these cycle tourism companies along the EuroVelo10 route?
- 1.2.10.2. How do they differentiate themselves from competitors?

2. Methodology

2.1. Detailed explanation of the methods used for data collection and analysis

Respondents were asked in June and September 2024 to contribute to the review by answering the ten questions above in a survey.

First, a few sentences explaining the methodology used to collect the responses (i.e. desk research, interviews, telephone calls, online surveys, etc.).

In addition, respondents were asked to list the names of the experts or companies that helped to collect the data.

2.2. Description of sources, surveys, interviews, or other research techniques

All respondents used desk research as a source, while the majority supplemented this with online surveys and interviews, including regional workshops. In addition, the Marshal's Office/West Pomeranian Voivodeship in Poland already had a system for recommending cycle-friendly places with facilities etc. in the categories of accommodation, catering, attractions, information points, other commercial and service facilities.

Almost half of the respondents used experts or companies to collect the data.

2.3. Mapping

The data collected from the survey was distributed across seven cycle-friendly categories in Table 3. To visually present the geographical distribution of the 176 surveyed SMEs' bicycle-friendly offers and services within the seven categories in Table 3, the latitude and longitude of the SMEs were used in Google My Maps.

From the maps in fig. 5-11 in chapter 12. Appendices at the end of the report show the distribution of the categories.

As many of the 176 SMEs surveyed cover more than one category, the total number of bicycle-friendly facilities and services in Table 3 is 218. The individual location on the map may therefore represent more than one category. For details please see [here](#).

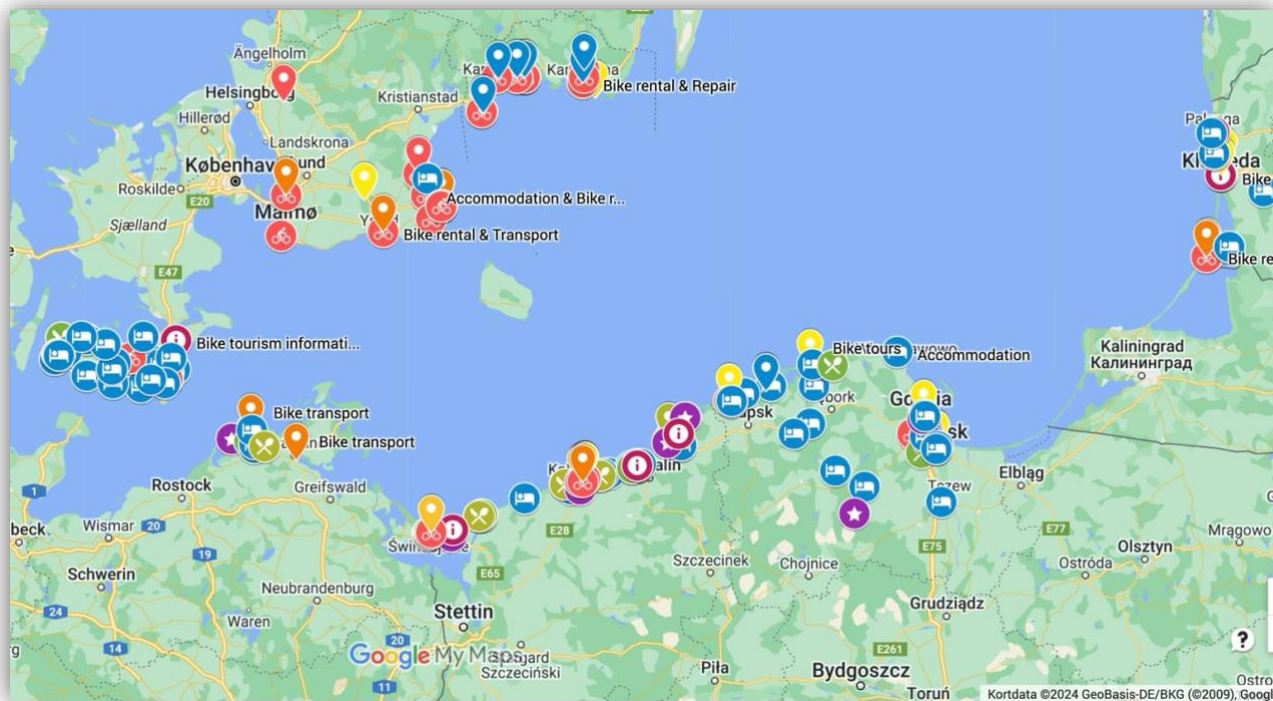


Fig. 4. [Results of mapping SMEs' bicycle-friendly offers and services in seven categories in the partner countries along EuroVelo10 in Poland, Lithuania, Sweden, Denmark, and Germany.](#) Source: Google My Maps. Data visualized based on project-specific information. Map created using the Google My Maps service. Map data: ©2024 Google.

3. Overview of SMEs' Bicycle-Friendly Offers

3.1. Summary of existing bicycle-friendly services offered by SMEs in the South Baltic Area

A total of seven partners from five countries in the South Baltic region (Table 2.) contributed to the survey, representing 176 SMEs with a wide range of a total of 218 bicycle-friendly services. As some SMEs offer more than one category of services, the same SME may also contribute to other categories in Figure 4. As mentioned above, when mapping the SMEs that provide bicycle-friendly services along the Euro Velo 10 route in their respective countries, the minimum number of SMEs should be at least 10. However, table 2 below shows that the geographical distribution of the number of bicycle-friendly offers and services is quite even for most partners.

However, Poland and Denmark are over-represented compared to the other PPs with 80 out of a total of 98 in the category 'accommodation'. Nevertheless, the responses overall represent a very wide range of bicycle-friendly services and offers with accommodation, restaurants and refreshments, bicycle hire and repair, bicycle tours, packages, information and attractions.

PARTNERS CONTRIBUTING TO THE MAPPING AND SURVEY								
COUNTRY	Poland	Poland	Denmark	Lithuania	Sweden	Sweden	Germany	
BBU-partner	Pomorskie Tourist Board	Westpomerania Regional Tourism Organisation	Visit Lolland-Falster	Klaipeda Region Association	Region Blekinge	Region Skåne	City of Barth	
Project Partner (PP) no.	Lead partner	2 + ASS.P2	3	5	6	7	9	
NUMBERS OF BICYCLE-FRIENDLY SERVICES OFFERED BY 176 SMEs								TOTAL
1. Accommodation	23	34	23	4	4	6	4	98
2. Restaurants and refreshments	2	11	1	0	0	0	2	16
3. Bike rental and repair	4	7	6	8	8	12	1	46
4. Bike tours and packages	5	2	0	5	2	3	0	17
5. Bike transport	0	7	0	3	0	5	2	17
6. Bike tourism information	0	4	2	4	0	0	0	10
7. Attractions	5	5	3	0	0	0	1	14
TOTAL	39	70	35	24	14	26	10	218

Table 2. The geographical distribution of the numbers of the SMEs within the categories.

3.2 Categorization of services (e.g., bike rentals, guided tours, accommodations)

A detailed examination of the 218 bicycle-friendly offers and services provided by SMEs reveals seven main categories and 30 subgroups, as outlined in Table 3 below.

CATEGORIES AND THEIR SUBCATEGORIES OF SERVICES					
1. Accommodation (98)	2. Restaurants and refreshments (16)	3. Bike rental and repair (46)	4. Bike tours and packages (17)	5. Bike transport (17)	6. Bike Tourism information (8)
Hotel	Bicycle Lunch/dinner box	Rental/borrow			Dissemination
Hostel	Wine producer	Trailers			Bicycle culture program
B&B	Early breakfast	Bags			
Cottage	Snacks and dishes	Repairs			
Camping	Water bottle refill	Sales of bicycles			
Shelter		Sales of spare parts			
One-night stays		Technical Support			
Laundry room		Phone consultations			
Guest kitchen					
Charging garage					
Secured bike storage					
Bike parking lots					

Table 3. Seven categories of bicycle-friendly offers.

3.2.1. Accommodation and lodging: Tailored for cyclists

Cyclist-friendly hotels and hostels: Many accommodations in the Pomorskie region in Poland like [Hotel Jantar Cwigon](#) in Ustka cater specifically to biking tourists by offering the possibility to book accommodation for one night, first aid kit, option to wash and dry clothes, free WiFi, luggage storage, bicycle services, early/late check-in and check-out for cycling tourists, possibility to charge e-bikes, etc.

Other accommodations, such as [Pommern Hotel](#) Barth, Germany also cater specifically to biking tourists by providing essential amenities like washing facilities and charging garages for e-bikes a market that is expanding rapidly¹².

While others like [Hotel Falster](#) in Nykøbing Falster in Lolland-Falster are offering a long list of bike-friendly facilities like locked bike and gear storage, packed lunch arrangement, bike washing, tools, and maps and many other cyclist-specific amenities.

¹² Statista Foresight on E-Bike Market Growth in Europe, 2023
<https://www.statista.com/outlook/mmo/bicycles/electric-bicycles/europe?currency=EUR#unit-sales/>

In West Pomerania in Poland 28 accommodations have facilities belonging to five categories (accommodation facilities, catering facilities, tourist attractions, tourist information points, other commercial and service facilities). To be accepted by this scheme, the accommodation facilities should allow accommodation for at least one day for at least four cyclists, have a place to safely store bicycles, have basic bicycle repair tools and information about nearby bicycle services and shops. Other categories of facilities should have a bicycle parking lot or a place for safe parking of bicycles, as well as information about nearby bicycle services and shops.

At "[Medusa Apartamenty i Bungalow](#)" in Niechorze, West Pomerania you will also be offered animation for children, sports activities for adults and seasonal SPA packages.

This ensures cyclists can rest with peace of mind, knowing their equipment is safe and maintained.

Bed & Breakfasts (B&Bs) and cottage rentals: Several B&Bs and cottage rental services, blend comfortable lodging with bike-friendly services like [Glimminge B&B](#), Skåne in Sweden that offers information about local attractions and offers bikes for rental for all guests included in the price. They often include secure bike storage, bike rentals, and on-site maps for self-guided tours.

The [Ratusz B&B](#) in Gdansk, Pomorskie Region offers accommodation for one-night, secure bicycle storage (e.g. lockable room, bicycle rack/stand with option to secure bicycle), first aid kit, free WiFi, possibility to fill bottle/bidon with water, contact details for local tourist information, transport companies, luggage storage, bicycle service etc., option for food and/or lunchbox to take away.

Camping sites and shelters: For those who prefer a more immersive outdoor experience, numerous camping sites cater to cyclists with facilities such as water bottle refills, snacks, and bike repair stations.

For example, offers the Recreation and leisure center "[Ventaine](#)" in Lithuania accommodation in a campsite and hotel, ferry transport for cyclists from Ventė to Nida and from Nida to Ventė. Some even offer one-night stays and early breakfast options tailored for cyclists heading out early.

Shelters in Denmark and Sweden are quite unique among the partners. Lolland-Falster has [55 shelters](#) out of which nine are open all year. The increasingly popular shelters, especially among families with children, are established by the two local municipalities Guldborgsund and Lolland. The nine shelters can be booked online at "[Naturlandet](#)". Some of the shelters e.g. "Errindlev Mejeri" offers drinking water, toilet, e-bike charging, shower, and electric power outlet. While others like "Frejlev Skov" also offer mattress rental.

Specialized accommodation packages: Businesses like [Turistgården Österlen](#), Skåne in Sweden also offer 3+day bike packages in wonderful Österlen, along the coast in Skåne.

While others like [“Kivik Strand”](#) in Skåne offer easy cycling and dining experience along the beautiful coast of eastern Scania from Simrishamn to Bromölla. Eat a three-course menu, stay and cycle around sights and nature.

Should you like to stay and learn how to cook in a rural area, [“Agroturism Goscina”](#) in Kashubia, West Pomerania.

3.2.2. Guided bicycle tours: Explore the region with experts

Cultural and scenic bicycle tours: Companies such as [“Poland By Locals”](#) in Gdansk, offer guided bicycle and walking tours highlighting the city's scenic routes and cultural landmarks. Znajkraj is a specialist in bicycle tourism and manages the "Cycling Thread" portal to promote bike trips and routes.

Another type of offer is "Via Baltica—Przewodnicy," which offers guided tours covering urban and natural landscapes. In Ustka, Pomorskie Region, [“Local Tourist Organisation Ustka – Słupsk Area”](#) provides extensive tours throughout the region, catering to both casual cyclists and biking enthusiasts. These tours offer a blend of sightseeing and in-depth historical context, making them popular for tourists interested in culture and local lore.

Multi-country and cross-border tours: Operators like [“Baltic Bike Travel”](#) in Klaipeda, Lithuania provide cycling tours in Lithuania and Latvia (the Baltic Seaside, Courland / Kurzeme and capital city Riga), guided bike tour in Klaipeda and Curonian Spit, bike Tour in Western Lithuania and Latvia, and cycling tours across the Baltic States.

Interestingly, the public transport authority [“Blekingetrafikken”](#), Karlskrona, Blekinge in Sweden has six different places in Blekinge where you can pick up your rental bike on one spot and leave it on another rental station. Also, it is free of charge to bring your bike on the trains within Blekinge.

Themed and custom cycling packages: Providers such as [“Sakura Tours”](#), Søvdé in Skåne, offers several cycle packages with different number of days, daily distance and theme/focus e.g. cycle packages along the Sydostleden, cycle Packages "In the Tracks of the Vikings" and the Sydkustleden Grand Tour. All packages can be tailored to your wishes and booked together with rental bike, luggage transport, box lunch/dinner and a bike host in most languages.

[“Travelshop”](#) at Malmö centralstation and Helsingborg, Skåne, Sweden has, among other things, a three-day package where you choose which places you want to pick up and drop off the bike. Choose from touring bikes, electric bikes, bike trailers and bags to tailor your cycling holiday. Travelshop also offers storage and transport of luggage. Travelshop is in collaboration with Malmö City, Region Skåne and RentBike.

3.2.3 Comprehensive bike rental and repair services

Diverse bike rentals: With reference to table 3. the SMEs cover 46 offers within the category Bike rental and repairs. The offers are quite evenly distributed among the partner countries. Very often the SMEs are doing both rental and repairs and sometimes even transport of bikes and luggage.

Like in the case of "[Larsson Bike](#)" in Lolland-Falster, Denmark, who offers rental bikes that can be rented in the store, or via an app. Larsson Bike sells new bikes and repairs all bike brands in their own workshop together with maintenance services. Wide range of bikes, e-bikes, kid's bikes, cargo bikes, MTB, dog trailers, baskets, helmets, clothing, bicycle bags and many other accessories including a Bosch E-bike Service center. Offers delivery of bicycles to an agreed location e.g. the ferry.

Convenient pick-up and drop-off points: Many rental services like "[UAB Velonida](#)" in Nida, Lithuania, provide flexibility by allowing customers to pick up and drop off bikes at different locations, such as along popular routes like Klaipeda–Nida in Lithuania. This is particularly useful for long-distance cyclists who do not want to return to their starting point. The company also offers technical support and phone consultations.

All-season rental services: Some companies like "[Larsson Bike](#)" in Maribo, Lolland-Falster offer bike rentals year-round, ensuring that tourists visiting in various seasons can access bikes, whether for winter storage or active use.

3.2.4. Full-service cycling packages: Tailored for multi-day adventures

Multi-day itineraries and grand tours: Companies such as "[Sweden by Bike](#)" and "[Evertrek](#)" provide detailed itineraries for extensive tours like the Sydkustleden Grand Tour. These packages often include accommodations at pre-selected sites, breakfast, route maps, and optional add-ons like picnic baskets and luggage transport to enhance comfort.

Cycling and dining combos: Certain packages include culinary experiences, combining cycling tours with multi-course meals at local eateries along the way, adding a delightful touch for food enthusiasts. At the "[Tabun](#)" restaurant in the picturesque town of Otomin, just outside Gdańsk you can enjoy 'Slow Food' Polish cuisine that combines tradition and modernity.

Family-friendly and group packages: Some SMEs offer family-focused packages that include group activities making it a complete outdoor adventure for all ages like "Villa Hasselbacken", Gärsnäs, Sweden, who also offer activities such as paddle boarding, riding and hiking.

Another example is "[Hotel Falster](#)", Nykøbing Falster, Lolland-Falster, offering several bicycle packages where you are always close to the sea and the forest. The relatively flat landscape makes it an ideal area to cycle in.

3.2.5. Supportive cycling infrastructure: Convenience for cyclists

Bike transport and parking facilities: Many services offer bike transport options and parking facilities at strategic points to support cyclists during their tours. You can travel between locations using the [MEVO public bike sharing system](#) that operates in the Pomorskie region. You can pick up your bike (and e-bike) directly from the spot. Also "[Centrum Nauki Experyment w Gdyni](#)" in Gdynia, Pomorskie region offer secure bike storage (e.g. lockable room, bike rack/stand with bike lock option), bike repair tools,

pump, first aid kit, free WIFI, possibility to fill up a bottle/bidon with water, possibility to charge e-bikes.

Charging stations: In addition, the E-bike users benefit from charging garages like "[Pommernhotel Barth](#)", Barth, Germany.

It is worth mentioning that there are four publicly available bike charging stations on the route in Poland:

1. in West Pomerania (around Mrzeżyno, Dzwinoń very close "[Bistro Rowerek](#)")
<https://maps.app.goo.gl/pM4nQJgEyUz5JP7R7>.
2. in Pomerania (Poddąbie - near Ustka, Sopot) Sopot - bike rest place (charge e-bike) -
<https://maps.app.goo.gl/iPz6muknkaAown3o7>
3. Poddąbie - bike rest place (charge e-bike) -
<https://maps.app.goo.gl/QRq7NAmDG3zfSfBP>
4. Mrzeżyno <https://maps.app.goo.gl/eUNJgNazDaXDtRUz6>

The European market for E-bikes is projected to surge driven by environmental consciousness and government incentives for sustainable transportation options, charging stations are very convenient to cyclists¹³.

One-night stops and essential add-ons: Some accommodations cater to cyclists with services like early breakfasts, and laundry facilities for those who are on extended routes and need a place to refresh. An example of this is "[Qubus Hotel](#)" in Gdansk, where you can book accommodation for one night, access to first aid kit, option to wash and dry clothes, free WIFI, possibility to fill a bottle/bidon with water, contact details for local tourist information, transport companies, luggage storage, bicycle services, etc. Other add-ons can be earlier/later check-in and check-out for cyclists, option for food and/or take-away lunchbox, own bike rental/cooperation with local bike rental company, timetables and information on local transport, trains, etc.

3.2.6. Tourist information

Dedicated tourist information points: Tourists can find dedicated spots offering maps, brochures, and cycling route information. These help visitors navigate the area efficiently and find hidden gems. Examples of this you will find in "[Marielyst Turistinformation](#)" and "[Stubbekøbing Museum](#)" Lolland-Falster. This is also true for e.g. the [Tourist Information Centers in Ustka](#) and [Łeba](#) in the Pomorskie Region and [Mielno](#) in West Pomerania Region.

¹³ Statista Foresight on E-Bike Market Growth in Europe, 2023
<https://www.statista.com/outlook/mmo/bicycles/electric-bicycles/europe?currency=EUR#unit-sales>

3.2.7. Other notable services and experiences

Tailored bike experiences and rentals: Offers include everything from classic bicycles to specialized models like tandem bikes and mountain bikes. Additional options include rentals with accessories like bike bags and helmets. "[Österlens Cykel](#)" in Simrishamn, Skåne Bike rental (classic, electric bikes, touring bikes, children's bikes, child seat/stroller) also offer transport of bicycles, bike repair and accessories 5 minutes' walk from Simrishamn station.

Collaborative efforts for seamless service: Companies work in collaboration with local hotels, campgrounds, and tourism boards, enhancing the overall experience through integrated services such as luggage transport and local attraction information.

An example of this is "[Hyr en Hoi](#)", Höllviken in Skåne cooperating with hotels, hostels and campsites in several places in the southern part of Skåne. They offer service, long and short-term bike rental, online booking, english website option, pickups/drop offs, quick service, accessories and bike repair (also e-bikes). Are aware of the EuroVelo route and work towards international target groups.

4. Geographical distribution

4.1. Mapping of SMEs offering bicycle-friendly services along the EuroVelo10 in the SBA

The EuroVelo10 in the South Baltic Area showcases a varied distribution of bicycle-friendly services:

Dense clusters: Lolland-Falster and key Polish cities are prominent hubs with comprehensive service offerings. Cities such as Gdańsk, Gdynia, Łeba, and Ustka have a higher concentration of cycle tourism services. In the other part of the region, we also see great developments in Krynica Morska, where there is a beautiful part of the route there, and tourists find it very attractive to cycle along the coast in Mierzeja Wiślana.

In these areas, the number of bike rentals and tours has increased, especially during the summer season, which attracts many tourists and promotes the growth of cycling tourism. The well-developed infrastructure and popularity as major tourist destinations contribute to this concentration, offering a variety of routes to suit different cycling preferences.

Although many companies operate independently, there is a trend towards greater cooperation, with companies complementing each other's offerings. This collaborative approach helps to create comprehensive and attractive packages for cycle tourists, enhancing the overall experience and encouraging more visitors to explore the region by bike.

In West Pomerania, towns with a higher concentration of cycle tourism services - mainly Mielno, Darłowo and surroundings, Kołobrzeg, Świnoujście and Międzyzdroje.

In Fischland-Darß-Zingst, Germany, the half island next to Barth has more cycle tourism offers, as for example in the Southern Bodden region. As Fischland-Darß-Zingst is a popular tourist region for cycle tourists, the concentration of cycle tourism services is higher.

Strategic corridors: Klaipeda and Palanga in Lithuania use ferry connections and natural routes to increase their attractiveness. The highest concentration of cycle tourism services can be found in the cities of Klaipeda and Palanga (based on the Google maps platform and companies interviewed).

However, in terms of cycling infrastructure, Palanga, Neringa and Klaipeda district are rated better by cycle tourism enterprises. Due to good ferry connections with Germany and Sweden, many tourists tend to start or end their cycling trip in Klaipeda. Often, the bike rental and tour companies organise and/or offer cycling tours through the Curonian Spit, Klaipeda - Palanga - Šventoji routes.

Emerging potential: The Swedish region of Blekinge, although less developed, has the infrastructure and geographical potential to become a significant area for cycle tourism.

It is an important political objective in Blekinge to develop the actual infrastructure and to market Blekinge as a tourist area where cycling would be a part of it. Blekinge has a politically decided goal to develop a so-called "national route" through Blekinge (there are currently only three approved routes in Sweden), which would mainly overlap with EuroVelo10. At the same time, and according to a representative of the region, there is very little knowledge about cycle tourism in Blekinge, except for the municipality of Karlskrona, which is the largest city in Blekinge.

On the positive side, the ferry connection between Karlskrona and Gdynia means a lot of Polish guests, which could increase the amount of cycle tourism services. As part of this connection, in May and September there is a promotional campaign called "The Swedish Flood", i.e. a promotion for a one-day bicycle trip to Karlskrona or Gdynia. Some companies have also pointed out the need for a common platform (preferably an app) where tourists can access all the information on EuroVelo10, other routes, services, etc.).

This comprehensive analysis underlines the richness and variability along the EuroVelo10 with a strong potential for cross-border cooperation to further boost the cycle tourism landscape and the underdeveloped potential of one-way cycling in the South Baltic Area.

A closer look at the geographical distribution of cycle-friendly services along the EuroVelo10 shows that cycle tourism services in the Polish coast and in Lolland-Falster dominate the South Baltic Area.

4.1.1. Poland, Pomorskie Region: A chain of coastal cities and towns rich in cycling services

The Polish coastline along the South Baltic, particularly cities like **Gdańsk, Gdynia, Łeba, and Ustka**, forms a stronghold of cycle tourism.

- **High-density service areas:**
 - **Gdańsk and Gdynia:** These cities are not only historic and culturally rich but also offer numerous rental services, guided tours, and accommodations aimed at cyclists. Their interconnectedness with nearby resorts makes them popular starting or ending points for cycling routes.
 - **Łeba and Ustka:** Known for their beaches and summer attractions, these towns are heavily geared towards tourists, which naturally extends to cycle tourism. The infrastructure supports bike rentals and local guided tours, creating a seasonal boom during warmer months.

4.1.2 Poland, West Pomerania Region: A dense network of cycle tourism services

Regions such as **Świnoujście, Międzyzdroje, Kołobrzeg, and Darłowo** see a significant number of services dedicated to cycle tourism.

Key cities and offerings:

- **Świnoujście and Międzyzdroje:** Popular for their proximity to both Germany and the Baltic Sea, these cities offer a range of accommodations, bike rentals, and guided coastal tours.
- **Kołobrzeg:** A major hub for beach tourism that extends into cycling, providing services like bicycle repair shops, rental centers, and extensive bike paths.
- **Darłowo:** Known for its historical sites, Darłowo is well-equipped with cycle-friendly services that cater to tourists interested in both recreation and culture.

Infrastructure and seasonal activity: The Western Polish coast sees an influx of cyclists particularly in the summer. The combination of beach resorts, campgrounds, and cycling paths that connect key attractions ensures a steady flow of domestic and international visitors.

4.1.3. Denmark, Lolland-Falster: A hub for diverse bicycle tourism services

Lolland-Falster stands out as a focal point for cycle tourism in the South Baltic area, showcasing a robust array of services:

Key towns:

- **Nykøbing Falster:** The regional hub. Gateway to Lolland-Falster: Located at a central point, Nykøbing Falster serves as a hub for tourists exploring the islands by bike. The town is easily accessible by train, ferry, and car, making it a convenient starting point for cyclists. A strong network of bike paths connects Nykøbing to nearby towns, beaches, and forests.
- **Maribo:** Nature and tranquility. Maribo Lakes Nature Park: The park provides stunning cycling routes through natural landscapes with views of lakes, forests, and wetlands. Offers opportunities for wildlife observation and eco-tourism. Cultural Heritage: The Maribo Cathedral is a landmark of historical significance, often included in cultural cycling tours.

EuroVelo 10: Maribo is strategically located along the Baltic Sea Cycle Route, making it a key stop for long-distance cyclists. Accommodation Options: Bicycle-friendly lodging and camping facilities cater to cyclists seeking a restful stop.
- **Nakskov:** Maritime history and local charm. Nakskov Fjord: One of Denmark's most scenic fjords, offering cyclists beautiful routes along the water. Includes short ferry rides that connect to smaller islands, enhancing the cycling experience.

- **Marielyst:** The beach destination. Cycling to the coast: Marielyst is a major summer destination known for its long sandy beach, attracting cyclists looking for relaxation after an active day. The area is equipped with bike rentals, picnic spots, and leisure activities suitable for families traveling by bike. Proximity to Attractions: Short cycling trips from Marielyst can lead to local attractions like the natural reserves.

Cycling Infrastructure: Well-marked cycling paths connect Marielyst to other towns like Nykøbing and Gedser, making it an essential waypoint for regional cycling tourism.

Diversity of services: All four towns are part of Denmark's interconnected cycle network, making them natural stops for regional and international cyclists, especially those on the EuroVelo 10 route. Services in Lolland-Falster range from campsites and bed and breakfasts to historical and cultural sites, creating an attractive cycling network. The strategic location of these services allows cyclists to move seamlessly from outdoor activities to cultural immersion.

4.1.4. Lithuania: Klaipeda and Palanga's strategic importance

The Lithuanian cities of **Klaipeda, Palanga, and Nida** form a concentrated area for bicycle services, buoyed by the unique geography of the **Curonian Spit**.

- **Service clusters:**
 - **Klaipeda:** A key starting or stopping point for cyclists due to its ferry links to Germany and Sweden, facilitating cross-border tourism.
 - **Palanga:** Well-rated for its cycling infrastructure, Palanga offers a wide array of bike-friendly services, including rentals and routes extending to **Šventoji**.
 - **Nida:** This town is part of the Curonian Spit, known for its unparalleled cycling routes that mix dunes, forests, and sea views.
- **Tourism strategy:** The synergy between bike rental companies, local authorities and tourism agencies in Lithuania has created a favourable environment for cycling enthusiasts. Services often include comprehensive packages that integrate ferry rides, guided tours and cultural stops, allowing cyclists to effortlessly explore scenic and historic routes. Cycle tourism is also increasingly being recognised by local governments. For example, Klaipeda Municipality is planning new cycle paths throughout the city to improve safety and comfort for cyclists. In addition, the municipality of Neringa has decided to join the "Network: Cities & Regions for Cyclists".

4.1.5. Sweden: Blekinge's nascent bicycle tourism potential

While less developed compared to Denmark and Poland, **Blekinge, Sweden** shows potential growth:

Emerging areas:

- **Karlskrona:** As the largest city in Blekinge and with a ferry route to Gdynia, Karlskrona stands as a gateway for Polish cyclists.
- **Bräkne-Hoby and Karlshamn:** Smaller towns within Blekinge with emerging services that support local and visiting cyclists.

Opportunities for expansion: Blekinge's coastal routes and natural parks offer an untapped market for cycling tourism. Local SMEs have noted the need for strategic development to elevate the region's visibility and services.

4.1.6 Skåne, Sweden: A flourishing hub for cycle tourism

Skåne, the southernmost region of Sweden, has emerged as a prominent destination for cycling enthusiasts, particularly along the Eurovelo10. The region boasts well-developed infrastructure and a variety of services catering to cyclists.

Key areas and services:

- **Malmö:** As a major urban center, Malmö offers numerous bike rental shops, guided tours, and cycling-friendly accommodations. The city's commitment to sustainable transport is evident in its extensive network of bike lanes and cyclist amenities.
- **Ystad:** This coastal town serves as a gateway to the scenic Österlen area, known for its picturesque landscapes and charming villages. Cyclists can find specialized services, including bike rentals and local tours, enhancing their experience along the EuroVelo10.
- **Simrishamn:** Located in the heart of Österlen, Simrishamn is a focal point for cycle tourism, offering a range of services such as bike-friendly accommodations, repair shops, and detailed route information.

Infrastructure and routes: Skåne's commitment to promoting cycling is evident in its well-maintained roads and clear signage. The region has integrated national cycle routes such as Sydkustleden and Sydostleden into EuroVelo10, offering cyclists varied and scenic options. This route also passes through part of Blekinge and connects to Skåne and Småland.

4.1.7 Germany: A comprehensive network supporting cycle tourism

Germany's segment of the EuroVelo10, known as the Baltic Sea Cycle Route, offers cyclists a rich tapestry of landscapes, from serene coastal stretches to historic towns. The country is renowned for its cyclist-friendly infrastructure and extensive services.

Notable regions and services:

- **Mecklenburg-Vorpommern:** This area includes the scenic island of Rügen and the historic city of Stralsund. The region is dotted with services such as guided tours, bike-friendly lodgings, and cultural attractions that enrich the cycling experience.

Infrastructure highlights: Germany's commitment to cycling tourism is reflected in its extensive network of dedicated cycle paths, clear signage and cyclist-friendly services. The Baltic Sea Cycle Route is well integrated into the national cycling infrastructure, ensuring a seamless journey for cyclists.

5. Analysis of current offerings

5.1 In-depth examination of the types of services provided by SMEs

Diverse service types highlight local strengths and tourist appeal

The services offered by SMEs along the EuroVelo10 route in the South Baltic region are varied and meet a range of tourist needs. Key services include accommodation, bike hire, guided tours, repair services and package tours, each with their own strengths. The region's offer focuses on promoting cycle tourism, using scenic routes and integrating cultural and natural attractions.

5.1.1. Comprehensive accommodation options

SMEs provide diverse accommodations that are cyclist-friendly, such as:

Cyclist-friendly hotels

Example: “[Hotel Number One Grano](#)” in Gdansk provides secure bike storage, charging points for e-bikes, and laundry facilities tailored to the needs of cyclists.

“[Pommernhotel Barth](#)”, Germany caters specifically to biking tourists by providing essential amenities like washing facilities and charging garages for e-bikes. “[Hotel Falster](#)” in Lolland-Falster has been appointed a Bike Hotel and is offering bike packages.

Unique Features: 1-night stays, early breakfast options, and charging garages to support multi-day cycling trips.

Strengths: Enhanced convenience for travellers with secure storage and bike amenities.

B&Bs and family cottages

Example: “Morskim Szlakiem” in Ustka offers family-friendly lodging paired with guided bike trips.

Unique features: Comfortable accommodations paired with routes showcasing coastal and natural scenery.

Strengths: Combines homely stays with cycling experiences to create a welcoming atmosphere for families.

Camping sites

Examples: Various campsites throughout the region cater to tourists looking for nature-focused stays. “[Nakskov Fjord Camping](#)” has been appointed a Bike Hotel.

Unique Features: Budget-friendly and close-to-nature accommodation options.

Strengths: Appeals to eco-conscious travellers and those seeking outdoor adventure.

5.1.2. Bike rental and repair Services

Bike rental services

Examples: “[RentBike](#)” in southern Sweden offers bike rentals, including classic bikes, e-bikes, children's bikes, and tandems.

Unique Features: Multi-location hire services near nature and cultural sites; transport of private bicycles.

Strengths: A wide range of rental options catering to different cycling needs, from family outings to enthusiast tours.

Repair and maintenance services

Examples: Some SMEs like “Larsson Bike”, in [Maribo](#) and [Marielyst](#), Lolland-Falster are offering bike rental, repair, and maintenance services.

Unique Features: On-demand repairs, technical support, and spare parts sales.

Strengths: Reliable repair services ensure minimal interruptions for tourists, fostering trust and repeat visits.

Bicycle transportation services

Example: SMEs in Klaipėda, Lithuania offer services allowing tourists to leave rented bikes at any point along designated routes.

Unique features: Flexible bike pick-up and drop-off services, luggage transport.

Strengths: Facilitates ease of movement and travel logistics for tourists.

5.1.3. Guided tours and cycling packages

Day tours and multi-day packages

Examples: “[Sakura Tours](#)” and “[Sweden by Bike](#)” offer cycling packages along the Sydostleden with options for customisation.

Unique Features: Packages range from short two-day tours to full-week explorations, with inclusions like bike rental, accommodation, and luggage transport.

Strengths: Tailored packages enhance the tourist experience, allowing for flexible itineraries that suit different fitness levels and interests.

Cultural and scenic tours

Examples: “[Poland by Locals](#)” and “[By The Bay Bartosz Pieczyński](#)” specialise in guided tours that mix history, culture, and landscape exploration.

Unique features: Focus on local heritage, scenic routes, and detailed insights provided by expert guides.

Strengths: Adds value by offering in-depth knowledge of the region, making tours educational as well as recreational.

International routes and cross-border cycling

Examples: Some tours span across national borders, such as tours covering Lithuania and Sweden.

Unique features: Multi-country experiences provide unique cross-cultural insights.

Strengths: Attracts international tourists looking for extensive travel experiences.

5.1.4. Supplementary services and tourist support

Tourist Information Points

Examples: At Lolland-Falster, we now have 30 information points - all of which offer 3-4 physical maps of local cycling routes. This is done in collaboration with "[Naturlandet](#)".

Unique features: Assistance with maps, recommendations, and local guidance.

Strengths: Helps visitors navigate unfamiliar areas and maximises their travel experience.

Food and refreshment services

Examples: Some locations offer water bottle refill stations, snacks, and dining options as part of their service.

Unique Features: Provides easy access to food and refreshments, ensuring cyclists stay energised.

Strengths: Encourages longer cycling trips by offering convenient refuelling points.

Seasonal services

Examples: Winter storage options for bicycles and year-round rental services.

Unique Features: Maintenance services for long-term storage and advice for winter cycling.

Strengths: Extends the region's appeal beyond the summer season, making it a year-round cycling destination.

5.1.5. Specialised and niche offerings

Bicycle culture programmes

Examples: SMEs provide educational programmes on cycling rules, maintenance tips, and safety.

Unique features: Workshops and orientation sessions that engage both new and experienced cyclists.

Strengths: Builds a stronger cycling community and promotes safer, more knowledgeable travel practices.

Customisable packages and add-ons

Examples: Customisable cycling holidays that include horse-riding options, luggage transport, picnic baskets, and additional tour guides. [Pałac pod Bocianim Gniazdem](#) in Runowo, Pomorskie Region around 30 km from EuroVelo10 offers horse riding facilities, garden spa and free bikes for guests. Cyclists can either add some kilometers to their route or use the public transport with train Lębork - Łeba offering also a bike transportation, so they can also easily enjoy places located a bit further from the EuroVelo10 route.

Unique features: Adaptable to different tourist preferences for bespoke travel experiences.

Strengths: Provides added convenience and a personalised touch that appeals to luxury and family markets.

5.2 Identification of strengths

In building a competitive edge the SMEs along the EuroVelo10 demonstrate strong, cyclist-focused services with unique strengths such as personalized guided tours, comprehensive rental options, and cyclist-friendly accommodations. Enhancing these offerings with strategic marketing and highlighting these strengths can position them effectively in international markets. By leveraging the scenic beauty of the Baltic region, its rich culture, and the integrated services provided by these SMEs, the region can boost its profile as a prime cycling destination.

5.2.1. Comprehensive accommodation options

SMEs provide diverse accommodations that are cyclist-friendly, such as:

Cyclist-Friendly Hotels

Strengths:

- Partnerships with local hotels and hostels enhance the accessibility of services.
- Enhanced convenience for travellers with secure storage and bike-centric amenities.
- Cyclist-oriented services (e.g., bike garages, charging stations, washing facilities).
- Integration of accommodation with guided tours and bike rentals.

B&Bs and family cottages

Strengths:

- Combines homely stays with cycling experiences to create a welcoming atmosphere for families.

Camping sites and shelters

Strengths:

- Appeals to eco-conscious travellers, budget travellers and those seeking outdoor adventure.

5.2.2. Bike rental and repair Services

Bike rental services

Strengths:

- A wide range of rental options catering to different cycling needs, from family outings to enthusiast tours.
- Flexible rentals that accommodate different cycling experiences

Repair and maintenance services

Strengths:

- Reliable repair services ensure minimal interruptions for tourists, fostering trust and repeat visits.
- Comprehensive repair services, ensuring reliability and safety.

Bicycle transportation services

Strengths:

- Facilitates ease of movement and travel logistics for tourists.

5.2.3. Guided tours and cycling packages

Day tours and multi-day packages

Strengths:

- Tailored packages enhance the tourist experience, allowing for flexible itineraries that suit different fitness levels and interests.
- Personalization of guided tours for tourists looking for in-depth regional knowledge.
- Collaborations with international and local cycling experts for a comprehensive experience.
- Unique settings that blend nature with comfort, appealing to eco-conscious travellers.
- Packages that combine cycling with local attractions (e.g., wine producers, museums).
- Promotion of eco-friendly travel through sustainable transport solutions and partnerships.

Cultural and scenic tours

Strengths:

- Adds value by offering in-depth knowledge of the region, making tours educational as well as recreational.

International routes and cross-border cycling

Strengths:

- Attracts international tourists looking for extensive travel experiences.

5.2.4. Supplementary services and tourist support

Tourist information points

Strengths:

- Helps visitors navigate unfamiliar areas and maximizes their travel experience.

Food and refreshment services

Strengths:

- Encourages longer cycling trips by offering convenient refueling points.

Seasonal services

Strengths:

- Extends the region's appeal beyond the summer season, making it a year-round cycling destination

5.2.5. Specialized and niche offerings

Bicycle culture programmes

Strengths:

- Builds a stronger cycling community and promotes safer, more knowledgeable travel practices.

Customisable packages and add-ons

Strengths:

- Provides added convenience and a personalized touch that appeals to luxury and family markets.

Overall, the SMEs along the EuroVelo 10 offer well-rounded services with strengths such as cyclist-friendly accommodation, versatile bike hire and guided tours that combine cultural insight with adventure. These offerings, when strategically marketed, position the South Baltic region as a competitive and attractive destination for cycle tourism. By capitalising on their unique strengths and promoting cross-regional cooperation, SMEs can further enhance the region's profile as a leading cycling hotspot.

6. Challenges faced by stakeholders

6.1 Exploration of challenges encountered by SMEs in promoting and providing bicycle-friendly services exemplified

SMEs and cycle tourists may face similar challenges along [EuroVelo 10](#) (the Baltic Sea Cycle Route) which also shares part of the route with the Sun Route [EuroVelo 7](#) in Lolland-Falster in Denmark. From the German port of Rostock on the Baltic Sea coast, the EuroVelo 7 follows the Copenhagen-Berlin cycle route. The route of EuroVelo 10 also overlaps with [EuroVelo13](#) *The Iron Curtain trail* in Lithuania, Poland and to Lübeck in Germany. Also, [EuroVelo 9](#) - Baltic-Adriatic crosses the start of EuroVelo 9 in Gdansk, Poland. This could also increase the attractiveness of EuroVelo 10.

While they all attract tourists from all over the world, each route can also pose its own challenges due to its geographical length and the diversity of the landscape.

Here is an in-depth look at the challenges facing SMEs and tourists on these routes:

6.1.1. Reaching foreign markets and attracting international cyclists

SME challenge: As with EuroVelo10, SMEs along EuroVelo7 struggle to reach foreign markets due to limited resources for marketing campaigns and insufficient digital presence. Although few will complete the EuroVelo7 route in one go, which stretches from the North Cape in Norway to Malta, the SME segment requires them to target a wide range of international audiences with different interests and expectations.

Tourist challenge: For international tourists, the lack of easily accessible, detailed route information can make it difficult to plan a trip.

6.1.2. Seasonal tourism and weather variability

SME challenge: Both EuroVelo10 and EuroVelo7 are affected by seasonal cycling tourism. While the Baltic Sea Cycle Route is more popular in spring and summer, the Sun Route's attractiveness varies more widely due to different climates in the countries it passes through. SMEs have to cope with fluctuating demand and the challenge of maintaining business viability during the off-season.

Tourist challenge: Weather conditions can significantly impact a tourist's experience. The EuroVelo7 route's northern parts may be too cold or snow-covered for comfortable cycling in the winter, while the southern Mediterranean regions can be overly hot in the summer.

6.1.3. Long distances and logistics

SME challenge: SMEs wishing to support long-distance cyclists need to ensure continuity of services along the route. This includes providing accommodation, bike hire, repair shops and luggage transport services at various points. Providing this level of service over long distances and across different countries is resource intensive.

Tourist challenge: Cyclists undertaking long journeys face logistical challenges, such as finding consistent accommodation, places for bike repairs, or rental services that work seamlessly across borders.

6.1.4. Coordination across borders

SME challenge: Ensuring seamless services across multiple countries is a complex task. DMOs may struggle to coordinate efforts with businesses and tourism authorities in other countries to offer integrated cycling packages or joint marketing campaigns.

Tourist challenge: As with tourists in general cross-border issues like currency changes, language barriers, and differences in road regulations can be complicated. These factors can add stress to an otherwise enjoyable cycling experience.

6.1.5. Limited financial resources for innovation and expansion

SME challenge: SMEs often lack the financial means to innovate or expand their services. For example, offering electric bikes requires investment that small businesses may not be able to afford without external funding or grants and should be supported by the DMOs.

Tourist challenge: Without modern services like e-bike charging stations or updated navigation tools, cyclists may find it harder to plan and enjoy longer, more challenging routes.

6.1.6. Competition with established cycling destinations

SME challenge: Both EuroVelo10 and EuroVelo7 routes face competition from more renowned cycling destinations in Europe. Together with the support from the DMOs the SMEs need to find unique ways to differentiate their services and promote their specific region as a desirable cycling destination.

Tourist challenge: Cyclists comparing options may find more well-known destinations appealing due to their comprehensive infrastructure, established tourism support, and widespread marketing.

6.1.7. Sustainability and environmental concerns

SME challenge: Balancing tourism growth with sustainability is an ongoing challenge. SMEs must navigate the need for eco-friendly services and infrastructure while still aiming to expand their businesses. For example, providing sustainable transport options and maintaining paths without harming local ecosystems are important yet challenging goals that should be addressed and maintained by the public authorities.

Tourist challenge: Cyclists who are eco-conscious may seek sustainable services, such as eco-friendly accommodations and responsible waste management practices along the routes. If these options are not available, it could affect their perception and willingness to travel to certain areas.

6.1.8. Safety concerns and accessibility

SME challenge: Ensuring the safety of cyclists is crucial. The SMEs should address the local authorities for them to maintain paths, provide proper lighting, and create safe road crossings, especially in areas shared with vehicles.

Tourist challenge: Cyclists face safety risks from poorly maintained paths or shared roads with vehicles. Additionally, accessibility can be an issue, especially for cyclists with disabilities or those requiring e-bikes for assistance.

Conclusion: Both SMEs and tourists face significant challenges. SMEs that want to grow their business need to improve their digital presence. Together, DMOs and public authorities should invest in infrastructure and multilingual services and work across borders to improve the tourist experience. Overcoming these challenges will require coordinated efforts, strategic marketing and investment in infrastructure to position these routes as competitive and attractive cycling destinations in Europe.

6.2. Analysis of common obstacles and barriers

SMEs along EuroVelo10 face a variety of obstacles that hinder growth, service quality, and international competitiveness. Understanding these common barriers is crucial for developing solutions that allow SMEs to thrive and support an enjoyable experience for bicycle tourists.

6.2.1. Limited Access to foreign markets

Analysis: Many SMEs lack the resources, expertise, or digital infrastructure to effectively reach international audiences. Without strong online visibility or multilingual marketing strategies, it's challenging to attract foreign tourists who rely on digital research and booking platforms. This limitation is compounded by language barriers, which prevent effective communication and service for international visitors.

Barrier impact: In case of low international tourist numbers the revenue opportunities will be reduced, leaving SMEs dependent on local or seasonal markets. This limits growth and prevents SMEs from tapping into lucrative foreign markets.

6.2.2. Fragmented digital presence and lack of booking platforms

Analysis: Many SMEs either lack a robust digital presence or have outdated websites that aren't user-friendly or mobile-compatible. Additionally, many SMEs are not featured on international travel platforms, which are increasingly used for trip planning and booking. Without integration with popular booking channels or apps, SMEs can miss opportunities to be discovered by tourists.

Barrier impact: Limited online visibility can reduce the likelihood of attracting tech-savvy travellers and lowers overall booking rates. Tourists may also find it difficult to get information or make reservations, leading to missed sales and a less appealing destination image.

6.2.3. Inconsistent quality of cycling infrastructure

Analysis: Infrastructure quality can vary widely, with some regions lacking sufficient signage, safe bike paths, or rest areas. Cyclists may encounter segments that are underdeveloped, poorly maintained, or shared with vehicle traffic, which can detract from the cycling experience and deter visitors from long-distance travel.

Barrier impact: Poor infrastructure poses safety risks and reduces the appeal of the route. Inadequate facilities discourage less experienced cyclists and can damage the region's reputation, affecting repeat visits and word-of-mouth recommendations.

6.2.4. Seasonality and Revenue Instability

Analysis: Cycling tourism is still highly seasonal, with peak activity in warmer months. This creates income variability, making it difficult for SMEs to maintain year-round operations and financial stability. Without alternative revenue sources or off-season attractions, SMEs face challenges in retaining staff and covering operational costs during low-demand periods.

Barrier impact: The seasonality issue limits long-term business planning and creates employment instability. SMEs may not have the resources to survive lean periods or expand services, ultimately impacting service quality and growth potential.

6.2.5. Financial constraints and limited access to funding

Analysis: Many SMEs operate with limited budgets, making it challenging to invest in new equipment, digital upgrades, or infrastructure improvements. Accessing funding, whether through banks, investors, or government grants, can be difficult due to complex application processes, competition, or a lack of awareness of available resources.

Barrier impact: Financial constraints prevent SMEs from innovating or scaling their services, which can lead to a lack of competitive offerings. This stifles growth and hinders the adoption of modern services that international tourists expect, such as e-bike rentals or digital booking systems.

6.2.6. Cross-border coordination challenges

Analysis: Given that EuroVelo10 spans multiple countries, effective coordination between SMEs, tourism boards, and local authorities is crucial. However, differences in regulations, language, and cultural practices can make collaboration challenging. Without unified standards and shared marketing efforts, it is difficult to create a seamless cross-border experience.

Barrier impact: Fragmented services and inconsistent quality across borders lead to a disjointed tourist experience, affecting the appeal of the EuroVelo routes as a cohesive long-distance cycling option. Poor cross-border collaboration also limits the potential for joint marketing initiatives and shared resources.

6.2.7. Competition from well-established cycling destinations

Analysis: EuroVelo10 faces stiff competition from more established cycling destinations in Europe, such as the Netherlands, Italy, and France. These countries offer well-developed infrastructure, extensive marketing, and established reputations as premier cycling locations, making it challenging for newer or less-prominent regions to compete.

Barrier impact: Without unique selling points or extensive marketing, EuroVelo10 may struggle to attract tourists who are more familiar with established destinations. This can lead to lower tourist numbers and reduced recognition of the region as a competitive cycling destination.

6.2.8. Logistical challenges for long-distance cyclists

Analysis: Many segments of EuroVelo10 lack essential support services for long-distance cyclists, such as bike transport, luggage handling, and accommodation booking options. Cyclists on extended trips often need reliable repair services, accessible rest stops, and luggage drop-off points, which may be limited or inconsistently available.

Barrier impact: The absence of logistical support reduces the convenience and attractiveness of the route for long-distance cyclists. It may also discourage tourists from attempting longer or cross-border journeys, which limits the region's appeal as a destination for adventurous cycling holidays.

6.2.9. Language and cultural barriers

Analysis: Serving a diverse international audience requires multilingual staff, culturally tailored services, and translation tools, which many SMEs lack. Tourists may face difficulties when booking services, asking for directions, or engaging with local businesses if language support is not available.

Barrier impact: Language and cultural barriers can lead to misunderstandings, reduced customer satisfaction, and negative reviews. Without effective communication, SMEs struggle to build strong connections with international tourists, reducing the likelihood of repeat visits.

6.2.10. Sustainability and environmental concerns

Sustainable tourism, also known as ecotourism, or green tourism, is a form of tourism that attempts to take responsibility for its current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts, by looking at the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and host communities.

When surveyed in 2022, over 80 percent of global travellers said that sustainable tourism was important to them and that they were willing to adopt sustainable travel incentives, something that has led to the ecotourism industry achieving a global market size of 172.4 billion U.S. dollars.

As of July 2023, the share of global travellers looking for accommodation with impressive sustainability innovation was over 50 percent. While the reasons that travellers stayed in sustainable accommodations varied, the majority of travellers were interested in either reducing their environmental impact or looking to have a more locally relevant experience. Nowadays, sustainable accommodations appeal not only to leisure travellers but business travellers as well - in 2022, most business travel buyers considered the importance of hotel sustainability to be either somewhat or very important.¹⁴

Regenerative tourism extends beyond traditional sustainable practices by actively seeking to restore and enhance local ecosystems and communities.

Analysis: As cycling tourism grows, so does the need to manage environmental impacts such as waste management, preservation of natural areas, and reduction of carbon footprints. Many tourists are eco-conscious and look for destinations that demonstrate sustainable and regenerative practices, which can be challenging for SMEs without resources for eco-friendly upgrades.

Barrier impact: A lack of sustainable practices may deter environmentally conscious travellers and contribute to environmental degradation, which can harm the region's natural appeal. SMEs risk losing a competitive advantage if they don't prioritise eco-friendly services and infrastructure.

¹⁴ Statista: https://www.statista.com/topics/1916/green-tourism/?utm_source=chatgpt.com#topicOverview

Conclusion: Key insights and impact summary

Addressing these common obstacles requires a strategic, multi-faceted approach that tackles the root causes of each barrier. **Digital transformation, infrastructure improvement, financial support, and cross-border collaboration are crucial foundational elements** that can unlock new growth opportunities for SMEs. By understanding these barriers and implementing targeted solutions, SMEs can build a stronger, more resilient tourism ecosystem that supports cyclists and strengthens the EuroVelo10 as a competitive, world-class cycling destination.

For example, the Swedish SME "[Hemmet B&B](#)" in Simrishamn in Skåne encourages all bookers to not forget booking a bike and also gives a 10% discount for all guests travelling by train, bus or by bike when visiting.

According to the Pomorskie Region *"sustainability may not be the core focus of the SMEs value proposition, but it is gradually becoming a more significant element in how companies build their offer for customers.*

Many tourists are increasingly environmentally conscious and actively seek out services that align with their values. As such, cycle tourism companies are beginning to pay more attention to environmental considerations when designing their services, i.e. offering water in recycled water bottles, etc. Offering bicycles made from eco-friendly materials, promoting cycling as a sustainable form of transportation, and raising awareness about protecting natural landscapes are some ways in which sustainability is being integrated into their offerings.

Moreover, the environmental aspect plays a role in customers' decision-making processes when choosing between different cycle tourism providers. Companies that highlight their commitment to eco-friendly practices and emphasise the environmental benefits of cycling may attract a growing segment of the market that prioritises sustainability. This is particularly relevant for tourists from regions where ecological awareness is high, making sustainability an essential component of the customer experience."

7. Opportunities for improvement

7.1 Recommendations for addressing challenges and enhancing existing offerings

7.1.1. Invest in infrastructure for safe, comfortable cycling routes

Objective: Develop and maintain cycling routes that are safe, scenic, and easy to navigate.

Investments needed:

- **Route Development:** Enhance existing trails and develop new routes connecting key regional destinations, with priority on areas along the Pomorskie EuroVelo10 that need upgrades.
- **Route maintenance:** Regularly maintain paths to keep them safe and accessible year-round, ensuring a smooth experience for cyclists.
- **Signage and wayfinding:** Install and ensure clear and consistent signage throughout the route, is essential to help cyclists navigate and enjoy their trip safely.



- **Benefits:** High-quality infrastructure not only improves the cycling experience but also attracts a broader audience, from beginner to advanced cyclists. Improved connectivity between destinations promotes longer stays, increasing local spending.

7.1.2. Establish and expand cycling-friendly services

Objective: Ensure cyclists have access to essential services for a comfortable journey.

Investments needed:

- **Bike rentals and repair stations:** Provide well-distributed bike rentals and repair shops, ideally at the route's access points, to support riders along EuroVelo10.
- **Secure parking and bike storage:** Offer secure parking facilities, especially at accommodations, public places, attractions, and major stops.

- **Cycling-specific accommodations:** Partner with local accommodations to offer amenities like one-night stays, charging stations for e-bikes, transport of luggage, and facilities for cleaning and storing bikes.

Benefits: Expanding cycling-specific services caters to cyclists' needs, making the region more attractive. Secure parking and easy access to repair services can enhance safety and reduce disruptions, leading to positive experiences and increased likelihood of repeat visits.

7.1.3. Enhance public transport connections for cyclists

Objective: Integrate cycling with other forms of transportation for greater accessibility.

Investments needed:

- **Bike-friendly public transport:** Work with local transit providers to ensure public transport, such as trains and buses, can accommodate bicycles, enabling cyclists to travel to different parts of the region easily. In coastal regions especially the ferries could be more cycling friendly.
- **Multi-modal hubs:** Develop hubs where cyclists can easily transition from cycling to public transportation, with secure bike storage and clear connections.
- An example of this is the German "[RADzfatz](#)" from VVR Verkehrsgesellschaft Vorpommern, that provides trailers for bikes on every bus route along the region.

Benefits: Improved public transport options extend the reach of cycling tourism, encouraging tourists to explore more of the region and stay longer. This investment also supports sustainable travel by reducing car dependence.

7.1.4. Implement a robust marketing strategy to promote the region

Objective: Establish the South Baltic as a premier bicycle tourism destination.

Investments needed:

- **Targeted digital campaigns:** Use social media, cycling blogs, and international platforms to highlight the region's scenic routes, cultural attractions, and cycling amenities.
- **Collaborate with influencers:** Partner with cycling and travel influencers to promote the region's unique offerings, sharing their experiences to reach global audiences.
- **Develop a centralised online platform:** Create a comprehensive website or app that allows cyclists to view routes, find services, and book accommodations, making trip planning easier. This could potentially be done via [eurovelo.com](#).

Benefits: Effective marketing will boost the visibility of the South Baltic region as a cyclist-friendly area, attracting a diverse range of tourists. Increased awareness and brand recognition can directly increase bookings, spending, and regional growth.

7.1.5. Ensure availability of essential amenities and bookable offers

Objective: Provide basic amenities along the EuroVelo10 to enhance cyclist convenience.

Investments needed:

- **Rest stops and refreshment areas:** Together with the SMEs, DMOs, and the public authority create designated rest stops with water refill stations, snacks, and benches along the routes.
- **Bookable accommodations and services:** Establish options for cyclists to book lodging, guided tours, and bike rentals in advance, either through a central platform or direct links with local providers.
- **Consistent repair facilities:** Position repair stations at key intervals along the route and provide essential items like tire pumps and basic repair kits.

Benefits: Access to regular rest and repair points, along with bookable services, makes the region's offerings more reliable and appealing. These amenities reduce planning stress and support longer journeys, attracting both short-term visitors and those seeking multi-day experiences.

7.1.6. Invest in reliable information and signage

Objective: Provide accurate and up-to-date information to assist with trip planning and navigation.

Investments needed:

- **Real-time updates on route conditions:** Ideally, a system to provide cyclists with current route conditions, weather updates, and event information should be developed.
- **Detailed maps and guides:** Offer digital and physical maps, including route descriptions, nearby attractions, accommodations, and service points.
- **Bilingual or multilingual information panels:** To support international tourists, national signage should at least be supplemented with e.g. easy understandable pictograms, particularly in high-traffic areas and points of interest, if allowed for by national regulations.

Benefits: Clear information and signage give cyclists confidence and make it easier for them to explore unfamiliar areas, leading to a more enjoyable and worry-free experience.

7.1.7. Potential benefits of investing in bicycle tourism in the South Baltic Area

Investing in bicycle tourism brings substantial benefits beyond direct tourism revenue. Key benefits include:

Economic boost: Bicycle tourism generates spending in accommodations, restaurants, and local attractions, helping to support the regional economy. With options like one-night stays and seasonal discounts, the region can extend its tourism season, benefiting local businesses year-round and the prolonged seasons due to the effects from climate change.

Sustainable tourism: Bicycle tourism is eco-friendly and promotes low-impact travel. By investing in cycling infrastructure and public transport, the region can reduce traffic congestion and pollution, supporting broader sustainability goals.

Health and regional attractiveness: Cycling encourages active lifestyles and attracts tourists seeking healthy, outdoor experiences. A reputation as a cyclist-friendly destination enhances the region's appeal, attracting both new tourists and repeat visitors interested in eco-tourism and wellness tourism.

Specific needs of cycle tourists

To make the South Baltic Area a welcoming destination for cyclists, certain needs specific to cycle tourists should be prioritised:

1. **Complete signage and wayfinding:** Install clear, consistent signage to ensure cyclists can easily navigate the routes.
2. **Accessible transport connections:** Provide public transport options that accommodate bicycles, making it easy to combine cycling with other transportation modes.
3. **Cycling-friendly services:** Ensure readily available transport of luggage, bike rentals, repair shops, secure parking, and cycling-focused accommodations.
4. **Reliable information:** Offer real-time route information, detailed maps, and accessible online resources to help cyclists plan their trips and make informed decisions.

Conclusion: Building a thriving bicycle tourism destination in the South Baltic

Addressing these needs requires collaboration among SMEs, local authorities, and tourism boards to create an attractive, sustainable, and cyclist-friendly environment. By investing in infrastructure, expanding essential services, and establishing a robust marketing strategy, the South Baltic region can enhance its reputation as a premier cycling destination in Europe. Such an approach not only meets cyclists' needs but also supports local economies, fosters sustainable tourism, and promotes healthy, active travel experiences.

7.2. Suggestions for collaboration and innovation

7.2.1. Establish a cross-border bicycle tourism network

Objective: Create a unified, multi-country network of bicycle-friendly services and experiences across the South Baltic region.

Collaboration ideas:

Form a regional alliance: Establish a more intense or even regular collaboration option involving SMEs, tourism boards, local governments, and cycling associations across Denmark, Sweden, Poland, Germany, and Lithuania. This kind of cooperation can set common standards and ensure quality services throughout the region.

Coordinate services and standards: Work together to offer standardised amenities, such as transport of luggage, one-night-stays, bike repair stations, accommodations with secure bike storage, and clear signage across borders. A common set of standards can ensure cyclists experience consistent quality.

Host regular meetings and workshops: Arrange regular meetings for stakeholders to discuss challenges, share success stories, and brainstorm new ideas for improving the bicycle tourism offering. This could be done i.e. in collaboration with the [EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region Policy Area Tourism Coordinators](#), who support cycling tourism in the Baltic Sea area. Currently (2022-2026) the Policy Area Tourism is coordinated by the Pomorskie Tourist Board from Poland.

Innovative benefits: This collaborative network can strengthen branding and enhance the South Baltic Area's identity as a seamless cycling destination. Establishing quality standards and connecting services will provide tourists with a reliable, attractive experience.

7.2.2. Develop joint marketing campaigns

Objective: Promote the South Baltic region as a unified cycling destination through coordinated marketing efforts as previously mentioned in WP4.

Collaboration Ideas:

Create a common data structure: Related to the presentation of attractions and offers by individual regions so that external booking or tourist applications could download current data.

Shared marketing platform: Further development of the shared platform on [eurovelo.com](#) featuring route maps, services, booking options, and local attractions, that can provide cyclists with a one-stop shop for planning their trips and accessing services.

Launch social media campaigns: Use social media to target international cycling communities with stories, photos, and travel experiences from the South Baltic Area. Collaborative campaigns can feature local attractions, unique cycling routes, and seasonal highlights.

Leverage influencer partnerships: Collaborate with travel influencers, bloggers, and cycling personalities to showcase the South Baltic Area's appeal. Offer familiarisation trips to these influencers, allowing them to experience and promote the region firsthand.

Innovative benefits: Joint marketing amplifies reach, reduces individual costs, and builds a consistent brand image across the region. This collective approach positions the South Baltic Area as a prominent cycling destination, attracting a broader audience.

7.2.3. Create multi-day, themed cycling packages

Objective: Offer unique experiences that cater to different interests and encourage longer stays.

Collaboration ideas:

Partner with local attractions: Work with museums, historical sites, wineries, and nature reserves to create themed cycling packages. Examples include "Culinary Trails," "Historical Routes," or "Coastal Eco-tours."

Involve local artisans and food producers: Collaborate with local artisans, markets, and food producers to include stops where cyclists can taste regional foods, learn about local crafts, or purchase unique souvenirs.

Develop bookable packages: Together with tour operators use the shared platform on eurovelo.com to offer bookable multi-day experiences, which can include accommodations, guided tours, luggage transfers, and meal options.

Innovative benefits: Themed packages add depth to the cycling experience, making it attractive to niche markets (such as food lovers, history buffs, and eco-tourists). These packages can generate additional revenue for local businesses and encourage longer stays.

7.2.4. Introduce smart infrastructure and digital innovations

Objective: Use technology to improve convenience, safety, and information accessibility for cyclists.

Collaboration ideas:

Co-creation: Together with existing apps like Komoot, Strava, Ride with GPS, Bikemap or Google Maps further develop real-time updates on nearby bicycle-friendly services, and points of interest etc. It can also include safety alerts.

Install smart signage: Use codes on signs that cyclists can scan for detailed information, such as directions, service options, or historical insights about the area.

Implement E-bike charging and GPS services: Set up e-bike charging stations along popular routes and consider integrating GPS trackers on rental bikes for easier location tracking in case of breakdowns. GPS-trackers are being implemented in the Pilot A Cross-Border Bike rental Denmark-Germany.

Innovative benefits: Smart infrastructure can enhance the cycling experience by making navigation more accessible and supporting a broader range of tourists, including e-bike users. Real-time information allows cyclists to stay updated and explore the region with confidence.

7.2.5. Foster public-private partnerships to enhance services

Objective: Improve infrastructure and services by aligning efforts between the public and private sectors.

Collaboration ideas:

Investment funds: European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Cohesion Fund (CF) and the Social Climate Fund (SCF) ¹⁵ European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)¹⁶ to further support bicycle tourism infrastructure, of new paths, signage, parking, and repair stations, with contributions from local governments, tourism boards, and private stakeholders.

Collaborate with local transport providers: Work with public transport companies to ensure bicycles are easily accommodated on buses, trains, and ferries, promoting multi-modal travel.

Develop incentive programs for SMEs: Offer subsidies, tax incentives, or grants to local businesses that implement cyclist-friendly services, such as secure bike storage, rental services, or eco-friendly initiatives.

Innovative benefits: Public-private partnerships encourage shared responsibility and financial support for essential services, reducing the cost burden on individual businesses. These partnerships also promote integrated services, benefiting both local communities and tourists.

7.2.6. Create a cyclist-friendly certification programme

Objective: To recognise and promote businesses that provide quality services for cyclists.

Collaboration Ideas:

Launch a certification system: Establish an attractive certification scheme for accommodation, restaurants and attractions that meet certain standards (e.g. secure bike storage, easy access, bike hire). This could be inspired by the special "system" in West Pomerania. Or the Finnish "[Welcome Cyclist](#)" programme. This aims to make life easier for cyclists looking for useful services. Bike-friendly businesses welcome cyclists, even when it gets muddy, and provide safe storage, pumps and basic tools, a charging point, and information about routes, services and bike facilities in the area. You can identify cycle-friendly businesses on the move with the Welcome Cyclist badge.

¹⁵ https://ecf.com/news-and-events/news/new-eu-funding-regulation-creates-cycling-investment-opportunities-worth?utm_source=chatgpt.com

¹⁶ https://transport.ec.europa.eu/news-events/news/commission-proposes-list-principles-boost-cycling-across-europe-2023-10-04_en?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Businesses with the badge also have access to the “[Bikeland](#)” map and benefit from the joint marketing of Finnish cycling tourism. The badge is free of charge for businesses and can be applied to accommodation, restaurants and cafés, bike rentals, bike services, tourist attractions, buses, taxis and bike ferries and boats¹⁷.

Promote certified businesses: Highlight certified businesses on the shared marketing platform and use the certification to build trust with cyclists seeking reliable services.

This could be shared with a wider audience by popular cycling bloggers on e.g. social media showing bicycle-friendly services.

Provide training for SMEs: Offer workshops or resources to help local businesses meet certification standards, covering topics like customer service, sustainable practices, and cyclist-specific amenities. This will be part of the training of the SMEs in BBU.

Innovative Benefits: A certification programme creates a recognisable standard of quality for tourists and encourages local businesses to invest in cyclist-friendly improvements. It also builds a reputation for reliability and professionalism in the South Baltic Area.

7.2.7. Host events and competitions to draw international attention

Objective: Create annual events that attract cyclists and promote the South Baltic Area’s cycling appeal.

Collaboration ideas:

Organise cross-border cycling events: Host annual cross-border cycling races or events, such as “South Baltic Bike Fest,” to showcase routes and local attractions.

Develop of GEOcaching on bikes.

Develop seasonal events: Create seasonal cycling events, such as autumn wine tours or spring coastal rides, highlighting different aspects of the region throughout the year.

Tourist discounts cards for cyclists on the EuroVelo 10.

Collaborate with international cycling organisations: Partner with cycling federations and international associations to bring global events or training camps to the South Baltic, increasing visibility and credibility.

Innovative benefits: High-profile events can attract media attention, generate tourism during off-peak times, and build the South Baltic’s reputation as a top cycling destination. They also offer opportunities for local businesses to showcase their services and engage with international audiences.

¹⁷ <https://www.bikeland.fi/en/tervetuloapyorailijatunnus>

7.2.8. Promote eco-friendly and sustainable practices

Objective: Position the South Baltic region as a leading eco-conscious cycling destination.

Collaboration ideas:

Develop green tourism guidelines: Collaborate on guidelines for sustainable practices, including waste reduction, energy efficiency, and eco-friendly cleaning for businesses catering to cyclists.

Incentivise sustainable business practices: Offer grants or discounts on certification fees for businesses that adopt green practices, such as offering e-bike rentals or using sustainable products.

Encourage carbon-offset programmes: Partner with environmental organisations to allow tourists to offset their travel emissions, such as by planting trees or supporting conservation projects in the region.

Innovative benefits: Sustainable regenerative tourism practices attract environmentally conscious tourists and promote the region's natural beauty. Eco-friendly initiatives help preserve local ecosystems, supporting long-term tourism growth and benefiting local communities.

Conclusion: Building a unified and innovative bicycle tourism destination

Through cooperation and innovation, the South Baltic region can build a robust and attractive cycle tourism ecosystem. A coordinated network of services, themed experiences and smart infrastructure will meet the specific needs of cyclists, enhancing their experience while supporting the local economy. These initiatives will position the South Baltic as a competitive, environmentally conscious and cyclist-friendly destination, attracting tourists from across Europe and beyond.

8. Case Studies

8.1. Showcase of successful SMEs or regions that have effectively promoted bicycle-friendly services

Several small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and regions along EuroVelo routes have successfully promoted bicycle-friendly services, enhancing the cycling experience and boosting local economies. Here are some notable examples:

8.1.1. Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, Italy (EuroVelo 8 – Mediterranean Route)¹⁸: The Friuli Venezia Giulia region has made significant strides in developing cycling tourism. The region focused on improving route infrastructure, implementing cycling-friendly services. In the region of Friuli Venezia Giulia, Bike & Train and Bike & Ferryboat services were put in place. The ferryboat service was introduced to connect the regional capital Trieste and the neighbouring municipality of Muggia, allowing for the carriage of 15 bicycles. It has the advantages of reducing road congestion and increasing sustainable mobility, and an extension along the Slovenian coast is already planned, targeting both commuters and cycle tourists. The train service runs between Udine/Trieste in Italy and Villach in Austria with special coaches to carry bicycles. It is operated by a joint venture of the Austrian ÖBB and the Italian company FUC and has space for 100-150 bikes per train.¹⁹

8.1.2. Andalusia, Spain (EuroVelo 8 – Mediterranean Route)²⁰: In Andalusia, authorities installed new signage and counters along sections of EuroVelo 8, enhancing navigation and safety for cyclists. Further, Cycling Plan of Andalusia 2014 – 2020²¹ includes the construction of a long-distance cycle route network as well as measures to promote intermodality, bicycle services, dissemination and awareness, and public bicycles. The Cycling Plan of Andalusia fosters collaboration between municipalities, expanding the opportunities already available (such as the Seville experience) and it brings economic benefits to local communities by encouraging a better spread of tourists in the region. It has been recognised internationally as a good practice and example for other Spanish regions.

8.1.3. Koper, Slovenia (EuroVelo 8 – Mediterranean Route)²²: The city of Koper developed cycling-friendly services tailored to the needs of cyclists. These services include accommodations with secure bike storage, repair stations, and information centers providing route details and local attractions. Such initiatives have made Koper a welcoming destination for cycling tourists. Further, the development of the 110-km long [Parenzana – Route of Health and Friendship](#) in Koper, Slovenia allowed the revitalisation of the closed Parenzana railway and to promote it as an important cross-border tourist destination. The promotion was done by linking

¹⁸ https://pro.eurovelo.com/news/2020-12-15_eurovelo-8-project-concludes-with-a-bright-future-for-mediterranean-cycling

¹⁹ https://pro.eurovelo.com/news/2020-09-18_eurovelo-8-project-concludes-with-a-collection-of-success-bike-stories-from-andalusia-to-greece?

²⁰ https://pro.eurovelo.com/news/2020-12-15_eurovelo-8-project-concludes-with-a-bright-future-for-mediterranean-cycling

²¹ [Cycling Plan of Andalusia 2014 – 2020](#)

²² https://pro.eurovelo.com/news/2020-12-15_eurovelo-8-project-concludes-with-a-bright-future-for-mediterranean-cycling

the route's cultural heritage with recreational and gastronomical events such as trekking, races and "wine runs".²³

Nowadays, Parenzana represents the connection between the coastal towns in Italy, Slovenia and Croatia and a place where hikers, runners and cyclists spend their leisure time. The railway route, promoted under the slogan of "Parenzana – The Route of Health and Friendship", connects the three countries and their national minorities and improves the tourism offer in Istria.

These examples demonstrate how targeted investments in infrastructure, services, and marketing can effectively promote bicycle-friendly environments along EuroVelo routes, benefiting both cyclists and local communities. Parenzana route is a good practice for how cooperation among partners on the local, regional and transnational level can result in a tourism product important for the entire region to benefit local people and tourists. Cross-border cooperation and the joint implementation of activities were essential for the success of the project and this a good example of how to develop other similar projects and cooperations.

The importance of such projects and cooperation are seen also nowadays, as local municipalities continue to maintain the infrastructure and take it into account when planning activities. Combining the natural, cultural and technical heritage of the route is linked to tourist events in the participating municipalities as part of an integrated product. This was done to raise the profile of the Croatia-Slovenia border area and awareness of the importance and potential of the track, particularly among nature and cycling enthusiasts. The project allows the cycle route to continue along the whole length of the Croatian and Slovenian part of the railway. Points of interest and services, such as milestones, places for sightseeing, rest places, information boards, info points and bicycle parks add value to the route. The project has also had a big impact in terms of cross-border cooperation and friendship.^{24, 25}

8.2. Lessons learned and best practices

The experiences of regions like Friuli Venezia Giulia, Andalusia, and Koper along EuroVelo 8²⁶ offer valuable insights into promoting bicycle-friendly services. Here are some key lessons learned and best practices that can guide other regions in enhancing their bicycle tourism offerings.

8.2.1. Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, Italy

Focus: Enhancing multimodal transport options for cycling tourists. This region showcases how cycling-friendly infrastructure integrated with public transport enhances accessibility, reduces congestion, and promotes sustainable mobility.

²³ https://pro.eurovelo.com/news/2020-09-18_eurovelo-8-project-concludes-with-a-collection-of-success-bike-stories-from-andalusia-to-greece?

²⁴ https://pro.eurovelo.com/download/document/MEDCYCLETOUR_Good_Practice_Parenzana-route_Slovenia.pdf

²⁵ <https://www.parenzana.net/en/trails>

²⁶ <https://en.eurovelo.com/ev8>

Key initiatives:

Bike & ferryboat Service:

- Connects Trieste with Muggia, accommodating up to 15 bicycles per ferry.
- Reduces road congestion by diverting cyclists from car-dependent routes.
- Supports both cycle tourists and daily commuters.
- Future Plans: Extension of the ferry service along the Slovenian coast, offering cross-border connectivity.

Bike & train Service:

- Operates between Udine/Trieste in Italy and Villach in Austria.
- Features dedicated bike coaches with a capacity of 100-150 bicycles per train.
- Managed by a joint venture between ÖBB (Austria) and FUC (Italy), exemplifying cross-border operational collaboration.

Impacts and lessons:

- **Intermodal Transport Solutions:** Seamless integration of cycling and public transport reduces barriers for tourists.
- **Environmental Benefits:** Reduced reliance on cars aligns with sustainability goals.
- **Replicability:** Demonstrates how regions can scale cycling infrastructure through cross-border partnerships.

8.2.2. Andalusia, Spain

Focus: Strategic planning and infrastructure development for regional cycling tourism.

Key initiatives:

Signage and navigation enhancements:

- New, standardized signage and counters were installed along EuroVelo 8 sections.
- This improves cyclist safety, orientation, and overall experience.

Cycling plan of Andalusia (2014–2020):

- A comprehensive strategy focusing on:
 - Development of a long-distance cycle route network.
 - Measures to encourage intermodality, including bicycle services and public bicycles.
 - Dissemination, awareness campaigns, and fostering collaboration between municipalities.
 - Leveraging the success of cycling initiatives like the Seville cycling network.
- **Municipal collaboration:** Encourages consistent quality and shared promotion across local governments.

Impacts and lessons:

Economic benefits: Facilitates tourism distribution across less-visited areas, benefiting local businesses.

Cohesion across regions: A unified plan fosters interregional collaboration, enabling efficient resource use and policy alignment.

International recognition: Acknowledged as a model for other Spanish regions, proving the importance of strategic planning and execution.

8.2.3. Koper, Slovenia

Focus: Revitalizing old infrastructure for cycling tourism and creating a cross-border cycling destination.

Key Initiatives:

Bicycle-friendly services:

- Secure accommodations with bike storage.
- Repair stations and information centers tailored to cyclists' needs.

Parenzana – Route of health and friendship:

- 110-km cycling and hiking route transformed from a disused railway.
- Connects Italy, Slovenia, and Croatia, fostering regional cooperation.
- **Promotion activities:**
 - Recreational events (e.g., trekking, races).
 - Gastronomic experiences like wine runs.
- **Slogan:** "The Route of Health and Friendship," symbolizing unity and well-being.

Impacts and lessons:

Cultural and natural integration:

- Combines heritage with tourism, attracting cyclists and nature enthusiasts.
- Points of interest include milestones, rest areas, information boards, and scenic spots.

Cross-border impact:

- Links coastal towns across three countries, fostering cross-cultural exchange and joint economic benefits.

Municipality involvement:

- Local governments actively maintain and enhance the route's infrastructure, ensuring long-term sustainability.

Best practices for similar projects

1. Collaborate across borders:

- Ensure that national, regional, and local governments work together for shared goals.
Create joint ventures for operations, like the ÖBB-FUC partnership.

Conclusion: A blueprint for future cycling tourism development

The EuroVelo 8 examples in Friuli Venezia Giulia, Andalusia, and Koper demonstrate how targeted investment in cycling infrastructure, services, and marketing can deliver significant benefits. They highlight the value of cross-border collaboration, multi-modal solutions, cultural integration, and long-term maintenance in building sustainable and economically viable cycling tourism destinations. These lessons provide a practical blueprint for other regions aiming to boost their cycling tourism offerings and foster community development.

1. Invest in multi-modal solutions:

- Develop cycling-friendly train and ferry services.
- Facilitate seamless transitions between cycling and other transport modes.

2. Promote local culture and heritage:

- Combine cycling routes with cultural and gastronomical events to enhance their appeal.
- Use heritage assets, like old railways, as foundations for new tourism products.

3. Plan strategically:

- Adopt comprehensive plans like Andalusia's Cycling Plan, which include infrastructure, intermodality, and public awareness components.
- Align municipal and regional priorities for cohesive development.

4. Ensure long-term sustainability:

- Engage local stakeholders in maintaining and promoting cycling routes.
- Integrate sustainable practices, such as reducing car dependence and using eco-friendly materials.

9. Conclusion

9.1. Summary of key findings

9.1.1. Increased marketing and cooperation for Baltic Sea Cycling

To make EuroVelo10 more attractive, joint marketing and strategic development of tourism offers have proven to be essential. Collaborative promotion, including fam-trips and coordinated outreach to influencers and journalists, has proven to be a valuable way to increase visibility and create cross-border tourism demand. This approach increases the reach of SMEs and strengthens the image of the route as a premier cycling destination.

9.1.2. SMEs struggle with market reach and digital literacy

SMEs along the EuroVelo10 corridor face challenges in creating "bookable" experiences and in accessing foreign markets. Many SMEs need support with digital marketing and user-friendly booking platforms to increase their international appeal. The introduction of cycle-friendly services and the digitalisation of offers appear to be crucial for improving competitiveness.

9.1.3. Demand for improved cycling infrastructure and services

Improving cycle-friendly infrastructure such as safe storage, luggage transfer, overnight accommodation, rest areas and repair services along the EuroVelo10 is a high priority. Improvements to these services are likely to enhance the experience of international cyclists and increase the number of visitors.

9.1.4. Strategic planning essential for sustainable impact

The Baltic Sea Cycle Route EuroVelo 10 shows that sound, forward-looking strategies are essential for a sustainable tourism and environmental impact. Alignment with EU policies on green mobility, sustainable tourism and cross-border cooperation can further enhance the value of the route. Policy alignment and careful planning contribute to long-term resilience and balance tourism growth with environmental sustainability.

9.2. Focus on the potential for growth and improvement of cycle-friendly services

Improving cycle-friendly services along EuroVelo10 and other similar cycle routes is not just about providing convenience - it's a transformative opportunity for economic growth, environmental sustainability and community engagement. The potential for improvement in this area is huge, especially as cycle tourism grows in popularity and support from local and regional authorities. Here's why:

9.2.1. Meeting the growing demand for sustainable tourism

As environmentally conscious travellers look for sustainable and active forms of tourism, cycle routes such as EuroVelo10 stand out. Investment in infrastructure (secure cycle parking, luggage transport, overnight accommodation, rest areas, repair services) can translate this interest into more visits and longer stays. Cycle tourists are often willing to explore local shops and services, creating demand for SMEs along the routes. With better infrastructure, cycle tourism has the potential to bring significant increases in visitor numbers, generating income for local businesses.

9.2.2. Creating a competitive advantage for the Baltic Sea Region

Making EuroVelo10 a model for cycle-friendly tourism would raise the status of the Baltic Sea Region among global cycling destinations. By setting high standards for cycle-friendly services, EuroVelo10 can attract new markets, including family travellers, adventure cyclists and long-distance cycle tourists. With concerted efforts in joint marketing, the region could establish itself as a top cycling destination, boosting the regional economy and attracting sustainable tourism.

9.2.3. Strengthening SMEs through 'bookable' cycle-friendly packages

A critical area for improvement is the creation of seamless, bookable cycling packages that include services such as accommodation, food, guided tours and bike maintenance. If these services are bundled and marketed effectively, they will be more accessible to foreign tourists who might otherwise face planning barriers. The development of one-stop booking platforms for these packages could facilitate access to local SMEs and turn 'bike-friendly' from a label to a trusted experience standard.

9.2.4. Using digital tools to improve customer experience

Improving digital literacy is essential to make these services accessible and attractive to international markets. Digital tools such as interactive route maps, live availability of bike rentals and accommodation, and easy payment systems can improve the customer journey from planning to post-trip. Investing in these technologies offers significant growth potential and enables SMEs to interact directly with and respond to the needs of cycle tourists.

9.2.5. Driving long-term benefits through policy-led infrastructure improvements

EuroVelo10 and similar routes can benefit from cooperation between the EU, regional authorities and local stakeholders to create a comprehensive network of cycle-friendly facilities. With political support and public investment, cycle routes can be developed and maintained in a sustainable way, attracting tourists while serving local communities. Improved cycling infrastructure is in line with green mobility objectives, may be eligible for funding from EU sustainability programmes and sets a benchmark for other regions.

Conclusion: A profitable cycle of growth and improvement

Investing in cycle-friendly services along EuroVelo10 has immense potential not only to increase tourism, but also to create a sustainable tourism model that promotes environmental protection and community development. By combining strong infrastructure, digital integration and strategic marketing, the region can create a high-quality, distinctive cycling experience that supports SMEs and strengthens local economies. The growth potential is significant and achievable with targeted efforts to make the Baltic Sea Region a leading example of cycle-friendly tourism.

And from the showcases along EuroVelo 8, we have seen that targeted investment in cycling infrastructure, services and marketing can bring significant benefits. This highlights the value of cross-border cooperation, multi-modal solutions, cultural integration and long-term maintenance in building sustainable and economically viable cycle tourism destinations.

10. Recommendations

10.1. Actionable recommendations for stakeholders, including SMEs, DMOs, and other relevant organizations

To fully exploit the potential of cycle-friendly tourism along the EuroVelo10 route, stakeholders - including SMEs, destination marketing organisations (DMOs), local authorities and the research community - need to take coordinated, strategic action. Here are tailored recommendations for each group to create effective, sustainable and growth-oriented cycle tourism services:

10.1.1. For SMEs: Building bookable, high-quality bike-friendly Experiences

Develop package offers: Create “bike-friendly” packages that combine accommodation, food services, catering, guided tours, and amenities such as secure bike storage and repair kits. These packages should be bookable online to attract international tourists.

Enhance digital presence: Prioritise a strong online presence by using social media and working with platforms that attract cycling tourists. Use multilingual booking systems and ensure websites are optimised for international users.

Collaborate locally: Partner with other local businesses (e.g. cafes, tour guides, bike shops, luggage transport) to create a network of bike-friendly services and provide a seamless experience for tourists.

Incorporate sustainable practices: Align with ecotourism trends by offering services such as water refill stations, eco-friendly packaging, and bike rental services that promote sustainable tourism.

10.1.2. For Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs): Coordinated promotion and support for SMEs

Lead joint marketing efforts: Carry out joint marketing activities: Run targeted campaigns to promote the EuroVelo10 route and the "cycle-friendly" services available. Highlight scenic, cultural and unique attractions along the route to attract a diverse audience.

Constant monitoring of cycling traffic, preferences and experiences of cyclists on EuroVelo10.

Platforms: Further develop existing platforms such as [EuroVelo](#) providing information on bookable offers and information resources for all cycle-friendly services along the route. This central hub should provide route maps, service directories and the ability to book services directly.

Prepare a publicly available database that can be used by portals and commercial applications.

Facilitate fam-trips and press tours: Organise trips for tour operators, journalists and influencers to experience and promote the route. This will increase visibility and help local SMEs gain recognition in wider markets.

Provide training and resources: Provide SMEs with resources on creating a cycle-friendly environment and training on digital marketing and customer service to improve their ability to attract and retain cycle tourists.

Offer Multi-Language Support: Ensure that all digital tools, from websites to apps, support multiple languages to cater to international tourists, enhancing accessibility and ease of use.

Conclusion: The coordinated effort of these stakeholders, from SMEs to local authorities, is essential for creating a thriving, sustainable bike tourism industry along the EuroVelo10. By focusing on infrastructure, digital accessibility, joint marketing, and sustainable practices, the region can capitalize on its potential to attract international cycling tourists and foster a vibrant, bicycle-friendly economy.

10.1.3. For regional and local authorities: Infrastructure and policy support

Invest in core infrastructure: Provide funding for dedicated cycle lanes, secure parking, rest areas and repair stations along the route. This physical infrastructure is crucial for the safety and satisfaction of cycle tourists.

Establish bike-friendly certification: Establish a certification programme for SMEs that meet bicycle-friendly standards. This can help set quality expectations and market certified services to tourists seeking reliability and quality.

Incentivise sustainable business practices: Provide grants or tax breaks to businesses that adopt sustainable practices, such as the use of renewable energy or environmentally friendly service options, in line with broader green tourism goals.

Monitor and evaluate progress: Regularly assess the impact of new services and infrastructure on tourism and local economies. Use surveys, data analysis and stakeholder feedback to refine strategies and address gaps.

10.1.4. For tourism associations and cross-border cooperation Extend outreach and Share best practices

Encourage cross-border partnerships: Establish partnerships between Danish, Polish, Lithuanian, Swedish and German entities to develop coherent marketing, operational standards and branding for the entire EuroVelo10. Joint efforts will ensure consistency and enhance the visitor experience.

Share data and insights on trends in cycle tourism: Facilitate knowledge-sharing workshops for SMEs and DMOs to stay informed about the latest cycle tourism trends, customer needs and best practices from other regions.

Advocate for policy support at EU level: Work with EU bodies to secure long-term funding for infrastructure and marketing initiatives. Highlight the alignment of the EuroVelo10 route with EU sustainability and mobility objectives to strengthen advocacy efforts.

10.1.5. For digital service providers: Improve digital tools and accessibility

Promote cycling-friendly services in existing applications.

Integrate feedback mechanisms: Integrate feedback tools into digital platforms to collect user experiences and continuously improve services based on tourist insights.

11. Future outlook

11.1. Anticipating future trends and opportunities for cycle-friendly services in the SBA

The South Baltic Area is poised to become a leading destination for cycling tourism, driven by evolving traveller preferences and strategic regional initiatives. Understanding emerging trends and capitalising on upcoming opportunities can significantly enhance the region's attractiveness to cycling enthusiasts.

11.1.1. Rise of sustainable and active tourism

Travellers are increasingly looking for environmentally friendly and health-conscious holiday options. Cycle tourism fits perfectly with this shift, offering sustainable travel experiences that promote wellbeing.

The availability and accessibility of public transport to and along the route should also be improved. This will limit the use of the car as a means of transport.

EuroVelo10, which encircles the Baltic Sea, offers a unique opportunity to attract tourists interested in combining adventure with environmental responsibility²⁷.

Opportunity: Develop and promote environmentally friendly cycling packages and transport that highlight the natural beauty and cultural heritage of the South Baltic region.

11.1.2. Integrating digital technologies

Digital transformation is reshaping tourism, with travellers expecting seamless online experiences. The implementation of digital tools such as interactive maps, real-time route updates and mobile applications can enhance the cycling experience. In addition, online booking platforms for accommodation and services tailored to cyclists can streamline trip planning.

Opportunity: Invest in user-friendly digital platforms that provide comprehensive information and booking options for cycling tourists.

11.1.3. Develop comprehensive cycling infrastructure

Well-maintained and interconnected cycling infrastructure is crucial for attracting and retaining cycle tourists. This includes dedicated cycle lanes, secure parking facilities, rest areas and repair stations along the EuroVelo10 route. Collaborative efforts between the South Baltic countries can ensure consistent infrastructure standards and improve the overall cycling experience²⁸.

Opportunity: Secure funding and partnerships to develop and maintain high quality cycling infrastructure across the region.

²⁷ <https://en.eurovelo.com/EuroVelo10>

²⁷ <https://interreg-baltic.eu/project/bab/>

11.1.4. Cross-border cooperation and marketing

The South Baltic Region is made up of several countries, each with unique attractions. Cross-border cooperation can lead to the creation of coherent marketing strategies that promote the entire EuroVelo10 as a single destination. Joint promotional campaigns, joint events and standardised services can attract a wider audience.

Opportunity: Establish partnerships between regional tourist offices to develop joint marketing initiatives and cross-border cycling events.

11.1.5. Focus on niche markets and personalised experiences

Cycling tourists often seek personalised and niche experiences, such as culinary tours, historical routes or nature-based excursions. Tailoring services to these specific interests can increase the attractiveness of the region. Offering guided tours, themed routes and customisable packages can cater to different preferences.

Opportunity: Develop specialised cycling packages that cater for different interests, making use of local culture, cuisine and natural landscapes.

11.1.6. Emphasis on health and safety measures

In the light of global health concerns, ensuring the safety and well-being of tourists is of paramount importance. Implementing health protocols, providing information on medical facilities and ensuring safe cycling conditions can build confidence among travellers.

Opportunity: Adopt and communicate comprehensive safety and health measures to reassure and attract health-conscious tourists.

By proactively addressing these trends and opportunities, stakeholders in the South Baltic region can position the region as a leading destination for cycling tourism, thereby promoting economic growth and sustainable development.

11.2. Considering new technologies or market demands

As cycle tourism evolves, so do the technologies and consumer demands that shape the industry. Stakeholders in the South Baltic region can take advantage of these developments to create a competitive and attractive cycling destination. Here's a breakdown of the key technologies and market demands that are likely to impact the region:

11.2.1. Intelligent route planning and navigation tools

Technology trend: Demand for interactive, GPS-enabled route planning tools is growing among cycling tourists who want real-time navigation, route customisation and access to local attractions. Advanced route planning apps with features such as suggested detours, historical insights and scenic routes offer an enhanced experience.

Consideration: Developing a digital app tailored to EuroVelo10 that integrates GPS navigation, interactive maps and local service recommendations will attract tech-savvy tourists looking for seamless and informed cycling trips.

11.2.2. Contactless Payments and Digital Booking Systems

Market demand: Digital payment and booking systems have become standard, especially as travellers seek ease and security when planning and paying for experiences.

Contactless payment options are particularly important for international tourists who prefer simplified transactions.

Consideration: Encouraging local SMEs and service providers to adopt mobile-friendly, multi-currency booking and payment systems can improve accessibility for international visitors. A unified platform that allows for bundled services (e.g. accommodation, luggage transfer, bike rental, tours) would streamline the customer experience.

11.2.3. Integrating Augmented Reality (AR) for enhanced experiences

Technology trend: Augmented Reality has potential in tourism by bringing places to life with historical or cultural overlays, gamified trails and interactive storytelling. For cycling tourists, AR can provide immersive experiences such as learning about regional history or spotting wildlife while cycling.

Consideration: Working with technology companies to develop an AR component for EuroVelo10 could provide unique, value-added experiences and attract tourists interested in learning more about the places they explore in an engaging, innovative way.

11.2.4. Accessibility of electric bicycles (e-bikes) and charging points

Market demand: E-bikes are a game changer in cycle tourism, allowing a wider range of people - such as older travellers and families - to enjoy cycling. As the use of e-bikes grows, so does the need for convenient charging points along key routes.

Consideration: Investing in charging points along EuroVelo10, particularly at key stops and attractions, will support the e-bike market while increasing accessibility. E-bike rental services and maintenance stations could also be a major attraction.

11.2.5. Sustainable and environmentally friendly service options

Market demand: With the growth of eco-conscious tourism, travellers are actively seeking services and accommodation that prioritise sustainability, such as eco-lodges, locally sourced food and minimal waste or regenerative initiatives.

Consideration: Certifying SMEs and tourism operators as eco-friendly through a standardised programme can meet this demand and enhance EuroVelo10's reputation as a green tourism destination. Providing tourists with information on eco-friendly service providers along the route can also appeal to this target group.

11.2.6. AI-powered personalisation and data analytics for tourism insights

Technology trend: AI and machine learning are becoming central to understanding and catering to individual tourist preferences. By analysing travel data, AI can predict trends, make personalised recommendations and optimise route planning.

Consideration: Implementing AI-driven analytics can help DMOs understand user behaviour and refine services based on demand patterns. Personalised route suggestions or itineraries based on individual interests (e.g. scenic vs. historic routes) can improve tourist experience and satisfaction.

11.2.7. Focus on wellness and health tourism

Market demand: The wellness tourism industry is growing, with travellers increasingly prioritising activities that promote health and relaxation. Cycling, often seen as both an exercise and mindfulness activity, fits well with this trend, especially when combined with services such as wellness retreats or nature immersion experiences.

Consideration: Promoting EuroVelo10 as a wellness experience, complete with spa retreats, healthy food and nature trails, can attract wellness-oriented tourists. Partnerships with wellness centres or the creation of wellness packages can meet this growing demand.

11.2.8. Remote work and "workation" opportunities

Market demand: With the rise of remote working, some travellers are combining work with leisure, seeking 'workation' destinations that offer scenic and relaxing environments. Cyclists may be particularly interested in longer stays where they can work remotely and enjoy cycling in their downtime.

Consider: Offering cycling packages designed for remote workers, with accommodation that offers high-speed internet and quiet workspaces, can tap into this emerging market. "Cycling and work hubs along the EuroVelo10 could provide spaces where tourists can combine work and cycling in a stress-free environment.

Summary: Embrace innovation and demand for competitive advantage. By embracing these emerging technologies and responding to market demand, stakeholders in the South Baltic region can position the EuroVelo10 as a leader in cycle tourism, appealing to a wide range of travellers. This approach not only enhances the cycling experience but also supports regional economic growth by attracting both tech-savvy and eco-conscious tourists.

12. Appendices: Visual representation of the geographical distribution of SMEs' bicycle-friendly offers and service

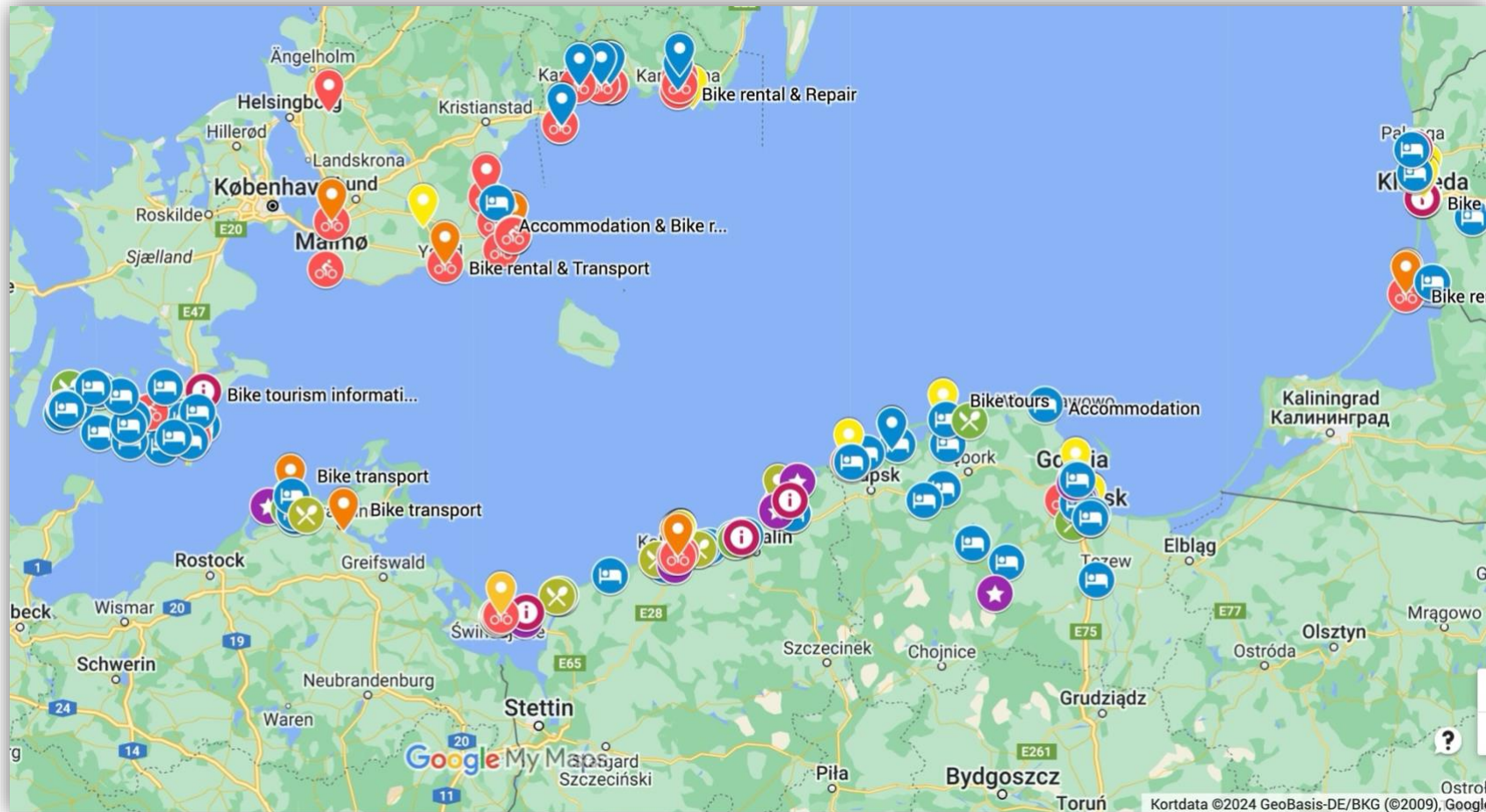


Fig. 5. [Results of mapping SMEs' bicycle-friendly offers and services in seven categories in the partner countries along EuroVelo10 in Poland, Lithuania, Sweden, Denmark, and Germany.](#) Source: Google My Maps. Data visualized based on project-specific information. Map created using the Google My Maps service. Map data: ©2024 Google.29

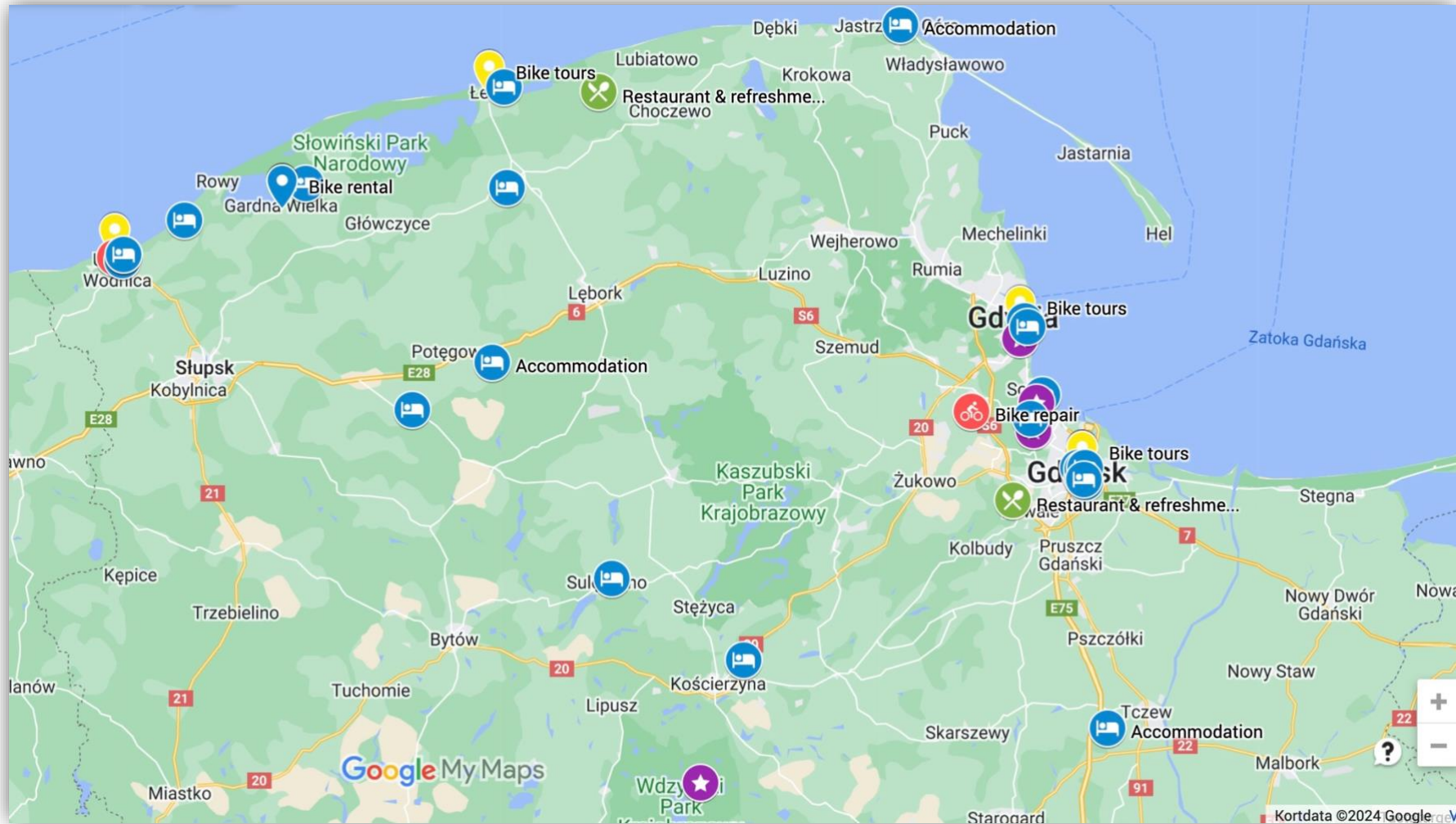


Fig. 6. Offers and services mapped along EuroVelo 10 in Pomorskie Region, Poland.

Source: Google My Maps. Data visualized based on project-specific information. Map created using the Google My Maps service. Map data: ©2024 Google.29



Fig. 7. Offers and services mapped in Zachodniopomorskie Region (West Pomeranian), Poland

Source: Google My Maps. Data visualized based on project-specific information. Map created using the Google My Maps service. Map data: ©2024 Google.

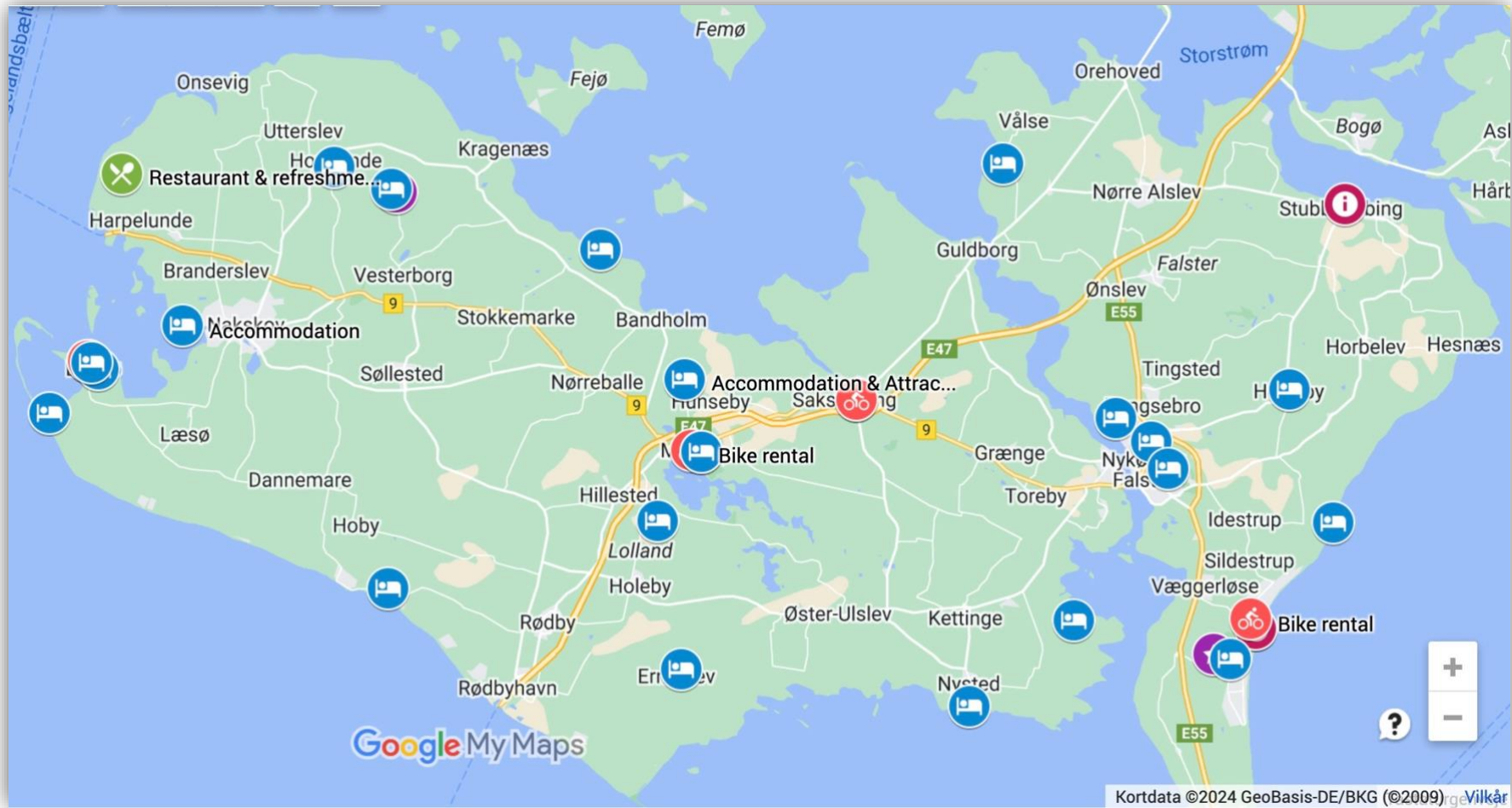


Fig. 8. Offers and services mapped in Lolland-Falster, Denmark.

Source: Google My Maps. Data visualized based on project-specific information. Map created using the Google My Maps service. Map data: ©2024 Google.

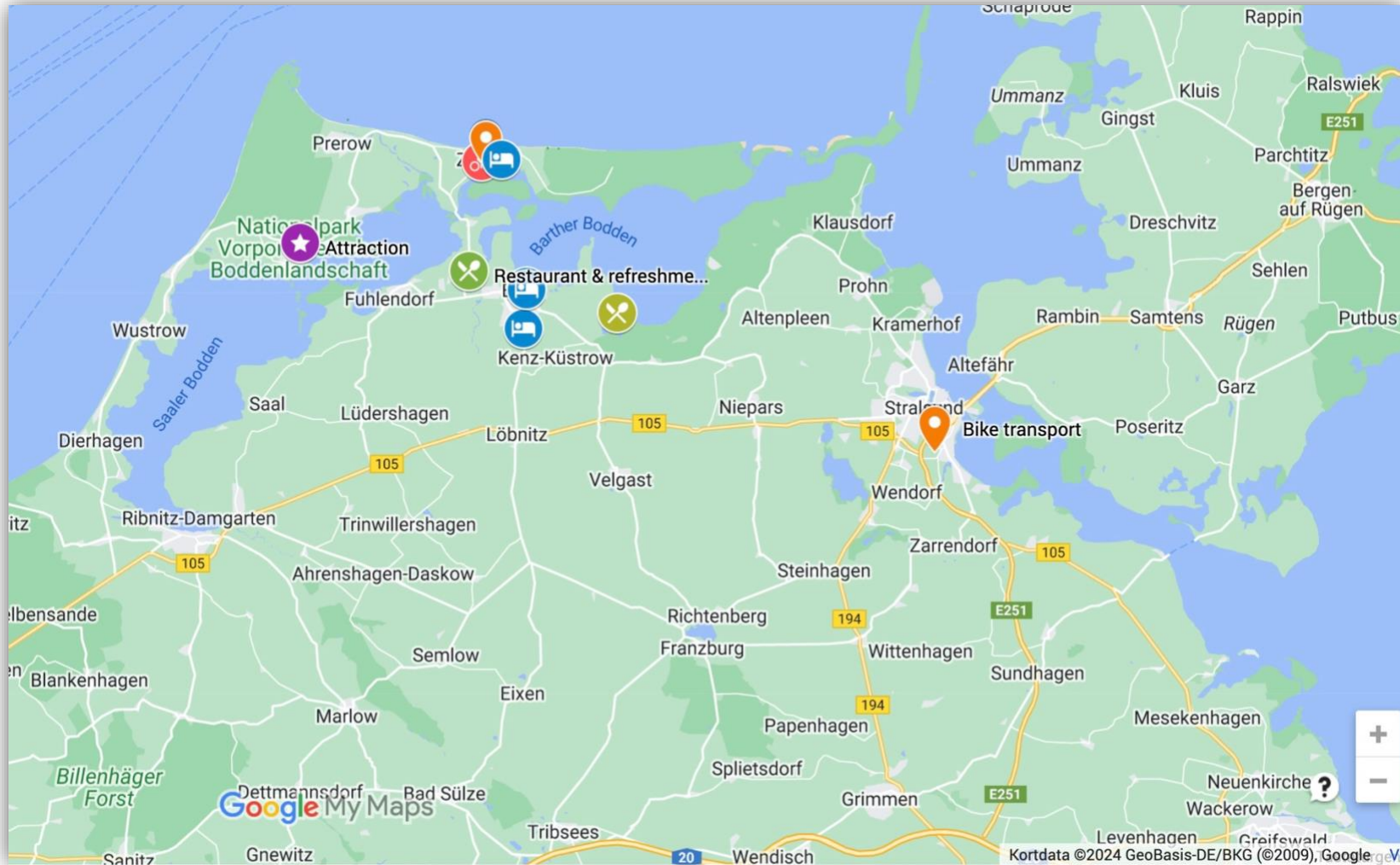


Fig. 9. Offers and services mapped in Vorpommern-Rügen, Germany.

Source: Google My Maps. Data visualized based on project-specific information. Map created using the Google My Maps service. Map data: ©2024 Google.

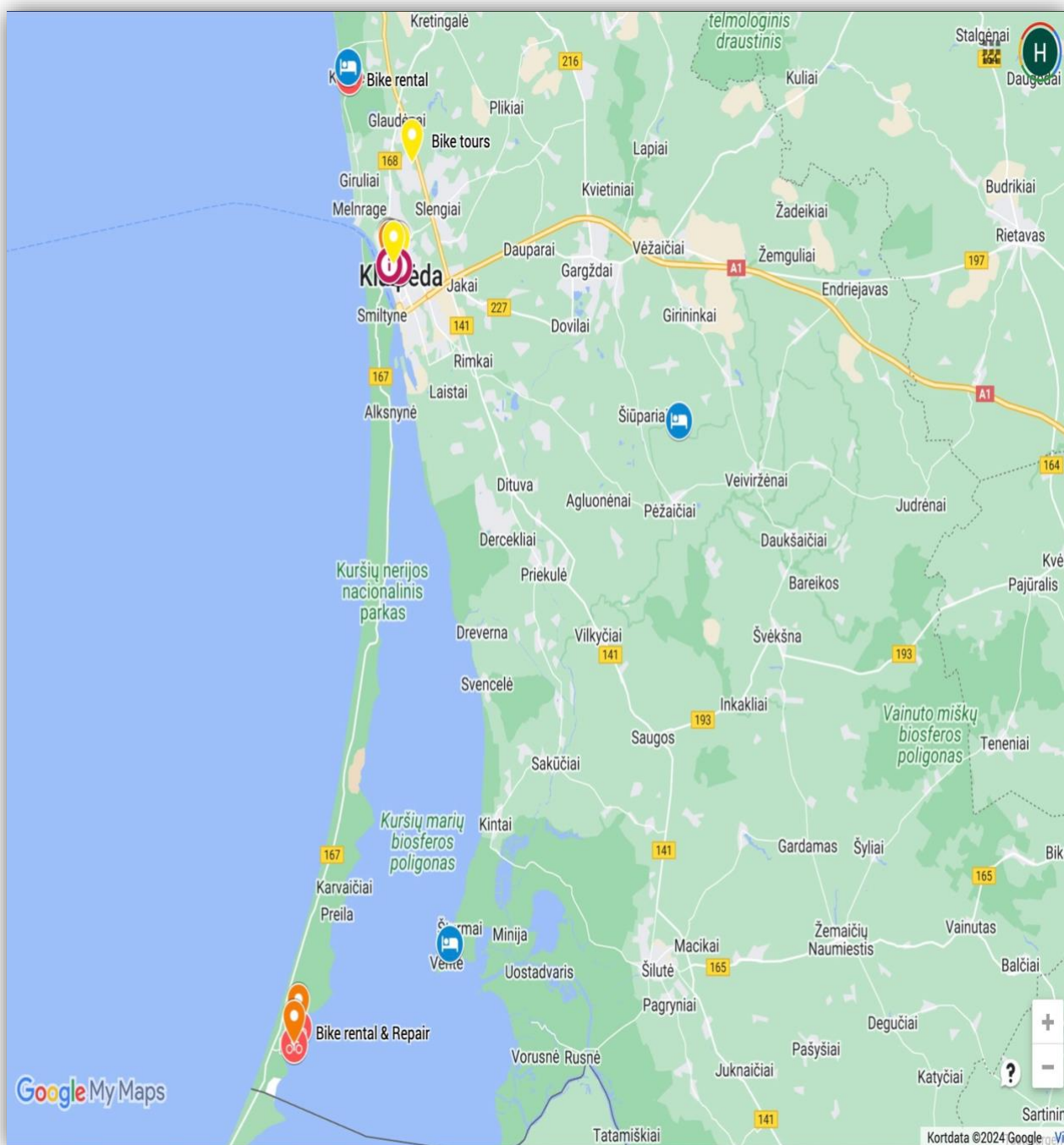


Fig. 10. Offers and services mapped in Klaipėda region, Lithuania

Source: Google My Maps. Data visualized based on project-specific information. Map created using the Google My Maps service. Map data: ©2024 Google.

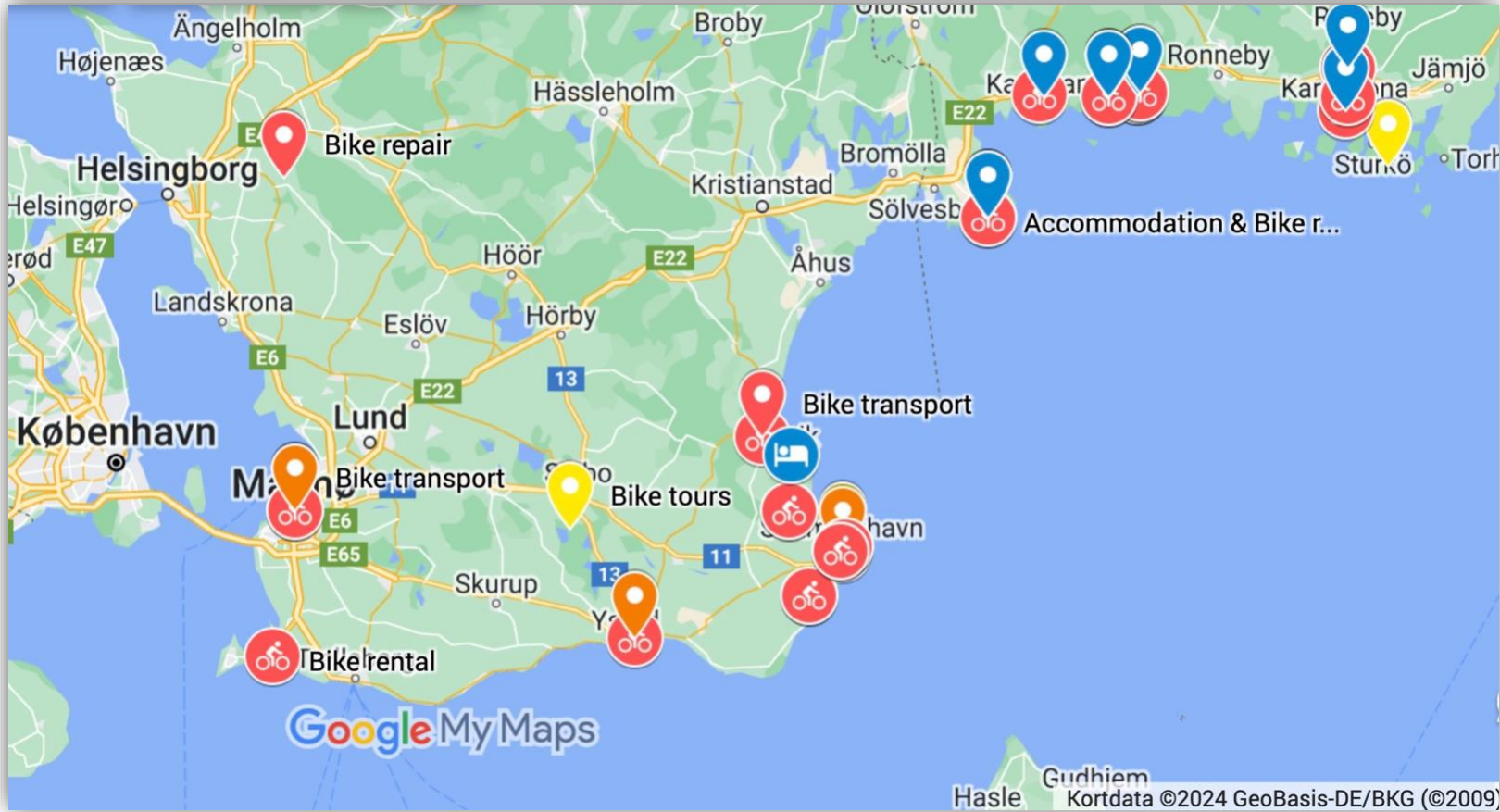


Fig. 11. Offers and services mapped in Blekinge and Skåne, Sweden

Source: Google My Maps. Data visualized based on project-specific information. Map created using the Google My Maps service. Map data: ©2024 Google.

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This report has been prepared by:

Henning Klarlund

henning@klarlund.eu

KLARLUND CONSULT

DK-VAT 40047735

DENMARK

For the BBU-partner **Visit Lolland-Falster**, PP3