



TREEATHLON

This informational document has been prepared for ROHU00467 – acronym TREEATHLON – Small-scale sustainable urban solutions to improve ecosystem services and reduce traffic related pollution in Biharia and Derecske. Its purpose is to present the main objectives, components, and expected results of the initiative, which promotes sustainable mobility, environmental awareness, and community engagement in the Derecske-Biharia region. The document was developed with the support of the Interreg VI-A Romania-Hungary Programme.



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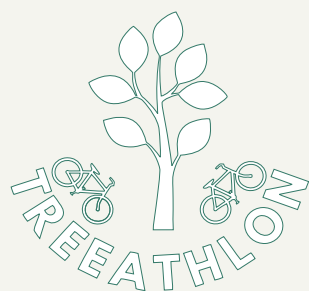
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The Treeathlon project is part of a cross-border initiative aimed at promoting sustainable urban solutions and reducing transport-related pollution in Biharia (Romania) and the town of Derecske (Hungary).

By establishing a bicycle rental system, the project aims to provide an environmentally friendly, healthy, and accessible mobility alternative for the residents of both communities.



Within the framework of the project, the Bike4Rent program was designed to support sustainable mobility, encourage the use of bicycles in everyday transportation, and promote an active ecological culture among citizens. The initiative is implemented in close cooperation between the local administrations of Derecske and Biharia, with financial support from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

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The Treeathlon project, with the full title: “Small-scale sustainable urban solutions to improve ecosystem services and reduce traffic-related pollution in Biharia and Derecske,” has an implementation period of 30 months.

The total eligible value of the project is 1,867,077.84 Euro of which 1,493,662.26 Euro represents the contribution of the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

The main partners are:

- Lead Partner: Municipality of Derecske (Hungary)
- Partner: Biharia Comune (Romania)



The overall objective of the Treeathlon project is to improve quality of life through greening measures, the development of green infrastructure, and the promotion of non-polluting transport.

Within the framework of the project, three main lines of action have been defined:

1. Trees4NextGens – tree planting activities (500 saplings in each locality);
2. Bikes4Rent – development of a bicycle rental system
3. Knowledge transfer and awareness raising – through the organization of seminars on various thematic areas.

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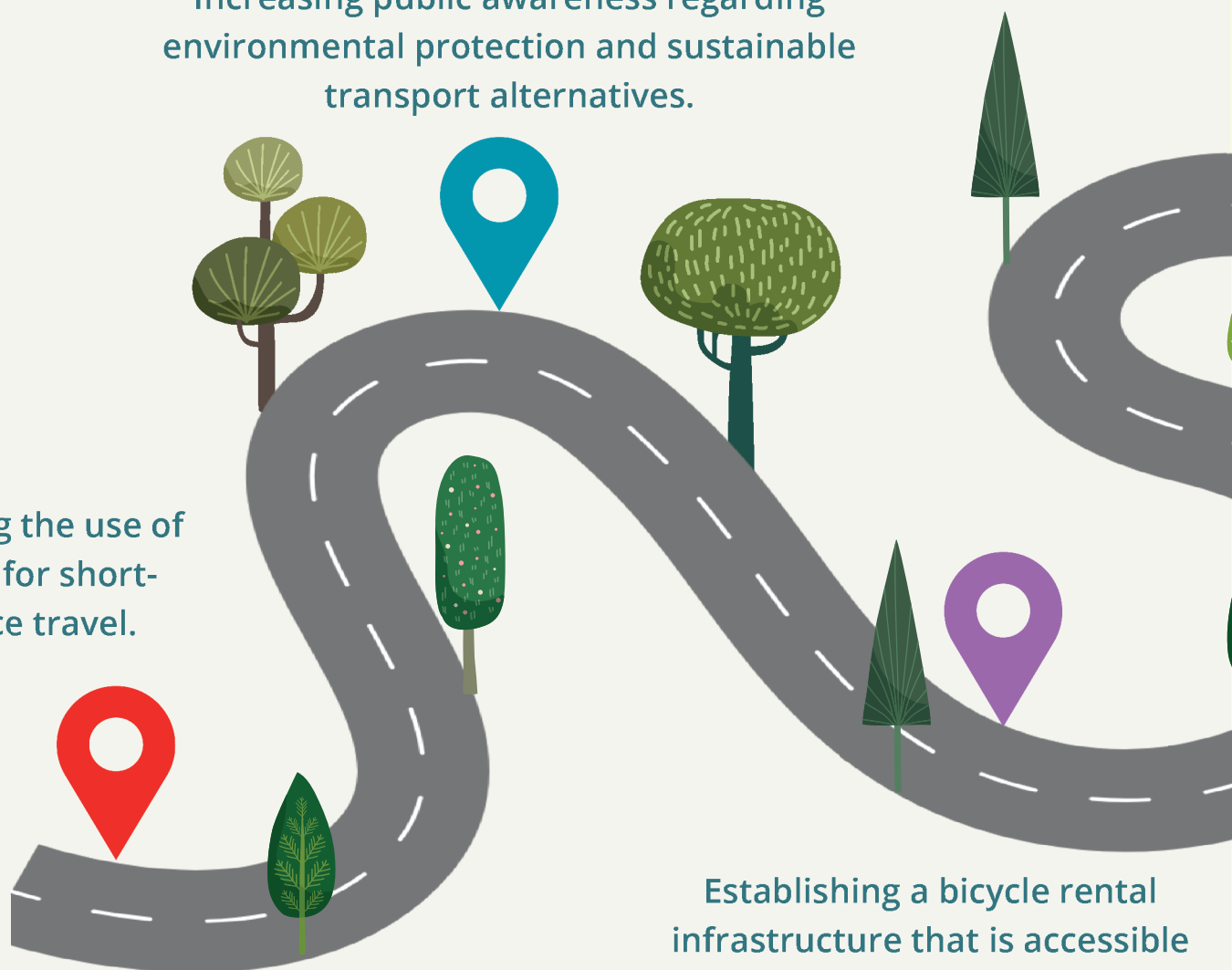
OBJECTIVES

Through the Bike4Rent programme, the project aims to promote sustainable mobility and reduce carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions by encouraging the use of bicycles in both urban and interurban transportation.

Increasing public awareness regarding environmental protection and sustainable transport alternatives.

Promoting the use of bicycles for short-distance travel.

Establishing a bicycle rental infrastructure that is accessible and easy to use for all age groups.



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Improving the local transport culture and strengthening community cohesion among residents participating in the program.



Planting trees and developing green spaces.



Reducing road traffic and noise pollution.

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IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of the Treeathlon project takes place simultaneously in the two partner localities – the Municipality of Derecske (Hungary) and the Comune of Biharia (Romania) – which share common objectives regarding environmentally friendly mobility and environmental protection.

Both communities face similar challenges:

The lack of sustainable transport alternatives;

The intensive use of private cars for short-distance travel;

The need for modern infrastructure that encourages physical activity and a healthy lifestyle.

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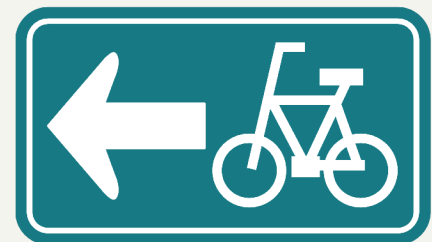
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Through the Bike4Rent system, these issues are addressed by a concrete solution: the creation of a local shared bicycle network that provides fast, safe, and convenient access for all citizens.

Main elements of the implementation:

20 bicycles for adults and 30 bicycles for children are made available in each locality;



Each bicycle is equipped with a protective helmet, lighting system, and anti-theft device;

Rental and rest stations are installed at strategic locations, such as school yards, along bicycle paths, and other key areas.



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IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY

The implementation of the Treeathlon Programme in Derecske and Biharia Comune has a significant impact on both the environment and the local community. The project contributes to the development of sustainable urban mobility by reducing dependence on private cars and decreasing greenhouse gas emissions.

Environmental impact:



- Reduction of CO₂ emissions by approximately 15–20 tons per year in each locality;
- Decrease in noise pollution and road congestion;
- Encouragement of the use of environmentally friendly modes of transport;
- Connection of bicycle infrastructure with green areas created through the Trees4NextGens sub-programme, thereby contributing to increased urban biodiversity;
- Promotion of the circular economy through equipment reuse and local maintenance.

Social impact:

- Improved access to mobility for all social groups, including young people, the elderly, and low-income residents;
- Creation of new opportunities for cooperation between local administrations, schools, and civil society;
- Promotion of an active and healthy lifestyle;
- Strengthening local identity and cross-border cooperation.



Overall, the Bike4Rent programme transforms local transport into a concrete example of European cohesion and environmental responsibility.

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EDUCATIONAL AND AWARENESS-RAISING ACTIVITIES

An essential component of the Treathlon Project is environmental education and the development of a new mindset regarding sustainable transport.

Planned activities:

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Four educational sessions in each locality, dedicated to 7th-grade students, focusing on environmental topics, clean energy, and road safety;
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Visual and digital campaigns (posters, brochures, etc.) promoting green transport;
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Interactive activities such as park excursions and practical initiatives, including planting bee-friendly seeds, small-scale home composting, and similar hands-on actions;
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Treathlon Days – two city events dedicated to promoting cycling and the development of ecosystem services.

Through these activities, the project aims not only to provide infrastructure but also to change behaviors and attitudes.

Thus, Treathlon becomes a sustainable educational tool that brings younger generations together around shared ecological values.

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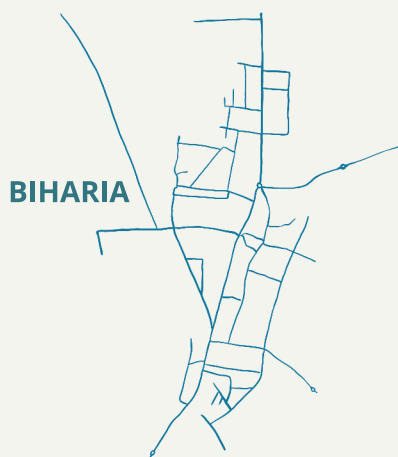
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The area of the town of Derecske is approximately 103.58 km². The current population is around 8,682 inhabitants (2025). The population density is relatively low (approximately 85 inhabitants/km²), which indicates a reduced level of urban traffic — conditions that are ideal for the development of bicycle infrastructure. The young population (aged 0–17) numbers over 8,700 persons, reflecting an active community with high potential for the use of alternative and active modes of transport. These data demonstrate that Derecske has a favorable demographic and geographic basis for a bicycle rental system: the settlement is sufficiently compact to allow fast and safe travel, yet also sufficiently populated to ensure the continuous use of the infrastructure.



The Commune of Biharia, located in Bihor County, has a population of approximately 4,393 inhabitants (2022). Between 2011 and 2022, the population of the commune increased by 4.47%, indicating a positive development trend and a growing need for modern infrastructure. The locality is situated in the immediate vicinity of the Romanian–Hungarian border, meaning that many residents commute daily to neighboring settlements or/ to Oradea. Public transport is limited, and the number of regular routes is low, which further highlights the importance of creating environmentally friendly alternatives such as cycling.



Thus, Biharia represents a strategic point for connecting green mobility at the cross-border level. The implementation of the Bike4Rent system will support not only the residents of the municipality but also the flow of people between Romania and Hungary, contributing to pollution reduction and to improving the quality of life in the border area.

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Why are these data important?

- Population size and density allow for the realistic planning and scaling of the programme (for example: “for a locality of 8,000 inhabitants, X bicycles and Y stations are sufficient”);
- The high proportion of young people supports the educational and public health rationale, as young residents can become the main users and promoters of sustainable transport;
- Demographic growth in Biharia indicates the need for modern, attractive, and safe infrastructure;
- The geographical position between two cross-border regions favors the expansion of alternative transport networks and regional cooperation;
- The moderate size of the localities enables efficient and easily manageable implementation, without major conflicts with car traffic.



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Project title: Treeathlon – Small-scale sustainable urban solutions to improve ecosystem services and reduce traffic related pollution in Biharia and Derecske

eMs code: ROHU00467

Acronym: TREEATHLON

Lead Partner / Partner: Municipality of Derecske (HU) / Commune of Biharia (RO)

Total project budget: 1,867,077.84 Euro

Project ERDF contribution: 1,493,662.26 Euro

Implementation period: 30 months

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