

## Press release

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## **The 2021 UCI Road World Championship provides a blueprint for a more sustainable future of cycling events**

**Key figures on greening, making cycling events more inclusive and well governed**

**Brussels, Belgium – 30 November 2021**

Today the UCI Road World Championships, Deloitte and Flanders present the 2021 UCI Road World Championships 2021 Sustainability Report. In this report, sustainability has been analysed based on three dimensions: environmental, social, and governance (ESG). These dimensions take 14 key sustainability topics into account which were mapped against the United Nations Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) in order to identify the key priorities. Key efforts were made in reducing the impact on the environment, making cycling events socially inclusive, and improving transparency in operations. The report also provides guidelines and recommendations to make cycling events even more sustainable in the future.

"The UCI Championships were not only an overwhelming success from an organizational and sports achievement perspective, we also set a benchmark in terms of sustainability for future events in Belgium and abroad. For the first time in the history of the UCI Road World Championships, the CO2 impact of the event was measured. Flanders has for some time already been leading in Europe in terms of recycling and the

reuse of materials. Thanks to an ambitious sustainability plan with somewhat 60 concrete action points spread over 14 themes, we translated this international leading position into the greenest world championship ever. The use of reusable catering materials, the maximum use of electric cars and the reuse of water, we hope more than ever to have set the example, but also convince the event organizers of tomorrow of the importance and added value of sustainable events for society," says Flemish Minister of Environment and Tourism Zuhair Demir.

UCI President David Lappartient said : "We applaud Flanders 2021 and Deloitte for the publication of the 2021 UCI Road World Championships sustainability report. As the world governing body for cycling, the UCI is committed to reducing the impact of its operations on the environment and collaborating with stakeholders to achieve significant changes within the sport. I therefore congratulate and thank Flanders 2021 and its partners for recognising the absolute importance of sustainability with the delivery of a strategy that covered numerous aspects of the organisation of the UCI Road World Championships. This report will act as a catalyst for change, providing future event organisers with valuable feedback, data and benchmarks to reduce the environmental impact –and at the same time enhance the social impact – of their events."

"We believe that the impact we have starts with ourselves. Dealing responsibly with the planet is central to our strategy. This is also reflected in our sustainability partnership with the UCI Road World Championships. We are proud that for the 2021 races in Flanders, we were able to capture data for the ESG framework for the first time in cycling history, allowing us to create the baseline for future sustainability benchmarks of cycling events. We strongly believe that this sustainability report is a first step in helping to make greener and more inclusive choices for the future. This first report will be the touchstone to help create that future," explained Piet Vandendriessche, CEO Deloitte Belgium.

"From our candidacy in 2018, sustainability was one of the absolute core values for the world championship. After all, a sporting event of this magnitude also has an important social role. Together with a multitude of partners, we have made a very strong commitment to reducing our footprint, to greener mobility and to an inclusive event. We are of course very pleased that these efforts have had an effect and that this has been investigated and established so comprehensively for the first time," said Christophe Impens of Flanders2021.

Tomas Van De Spiegel of Flanders2021 adds: "In addition to the unforgettable images of absolute top sport and frenzied fans, the world championship in Flanders will also be remembered as a trendsetter in the field of socially responsible organizing. We hope that Flanders 2021's efforts will inspire future organizers of major events."

## **Creating a baseline for CO2 footprint for future UCI Road World Championships**

For the first time in cycling events, an overarching approach has been created to determine emission streams which can serve as a blueprint for future events. Deloitte worked on a carbon calculation tool categorising emissions in three categories: direct GHG emissions (fuel consumption own vehicles, generators and airconditioning refrigerants), indirect GHG emissions from purchased electricity, heat and steam (electricity consumption from the events and the vehicles), and other indirect GHG emissions (fuel from third-party vehicles, water and waste water, waste, hotel stays, ...). For the first and second category, the CO2 emissions were reduced from 139.6 tonnes to 67.6 tonnes during the 2021 UCI Road World Championship. Of this 52% reduction, 45% was realised through the use of biodiesel for generators, 4% from the use of electric and hybrid cars, and 3% from green electricity. The third category however represents 97% of the emissions, and it is the category over which the UCI has least control.

Efforts that reduced CO2 emissions during the 2021 UCI Road World Championships include:

- 90% of the consumed electricity was sourced from the fixed network, with only 10% coming from biodiesel generators
- 95% of the sourced electricity came from green sources (solar and wind)
- 34 electric and hybrid cars were used during the event

“As major outcomes from this first baseline exercise, we consider that it raises the bar for any future editions of the UCI Road World Championships. Within the categories on which the organisation has a direct impact, the further electrification of the fleet and the improved use of the cities’ electric networks to reduce the use of generators are key. For the further reduction of emissions in the third category, the gathering of data on spectator mobility, the selection of hotels which make sustainable efforts, the promotion of travelling by rail rather than by plane or car for racing teams and press, and the encouragement of more vegetarian catering are recommended,” explained Eline Brugman, Director Climate & Energy at Deloitte.

To reduce the consumption of water, the use of vacuum toilets, saving up to seven litres per use, were favoured. The use of 162 vacuum toilets saved approximately 350,000 litres water. During the event 24.7 tonnes of waste was collected, representing the yearly average of 50 households in Flanders. According to waste partner Suez Group, the amount of waste was relatively low thanks to the use of +200,000 reusable cups and the 2,240 volunteers raising the awareness amongst cycling fans. Twenty-nine percent of total waste from the event was recycled. Further efforts can be made in the use of reusable material, the facilitation of the waste collection process and the use of waste-collecting groups along the tracks.

### **Mobility: making eco-friendly choices**

To streamline mobility during the event, a mobility expert was onboarded to encourage locals, fans, catering partners and other stakeholders to make eco-friendly choices. A mobility plan was developed for the period before and during the event, informing local citizens, providing deviation plans, routeplanning for fans, the communication of mobility information, and providing parking and public transport information. Communication campaigns were set up to promote the eco-friendly choices, such as a public transport campaign with NMBS and De Lijn, dedicated walking and biking routes in-between hotspots, bike parking and incentives for fans coming by bike. During both weekends the railway company recorded an extra 62,440 train passengers.

Further efforts still can be made in the use of tools to count/estimate the number of spectators, the development of event-dedicated public transport tickets, and onsite surveys to better evaluate the number of visitors and their means of transportation.

### **Become more inclusive**

A specific programme was put in place to oversee the accessibility and inclusivity of the event, providing more facilities for people with disabilities. This resulted in more adapted toilets, information points, assistant stewards and dedicated platforms, sign language, guides for the visually impaired. In total, 81 people with special accessibility needs made use of these services. For the second time in the history of the UCI Road World Championships, the G-Sports Race for people with disabilities was included in the event featuring 27 participants. To further promote social inclusion, the organisers engaged with many NGOs to integrate vulnerable and under-represented groups in the event as volunteers, with 112 people such as refugees, people with disabilities, and underprivileged youngsters taking part. Campaigns were set up in collaboration with two NGOs focusing on LGBTQ+ rights, with the aim of taking a first step towards a more accessible and inclusive sports climate for everyone.

Recommendations that can be made for future events include increasing awareness of reporting procedures of unfair treatment, being more ambitious in attracting female participants, the organisation of more campaigns encouraging sports activities with under-represented communities, and the introduction of gender-neutral toilets.

### **Implementing fair play and good governance measures**

Measures were implemented to ensure that races were correctly monitored in compliance with regulations governing cycling, anti-doping and technological fraud.

Governance measures were put in place including a transparent supplier selection procedure, the use of a transparent internal organisational structure, and budget transparency. For future events, the Code of Good Governance from the Flemish Sports Federation can serve as inspiration for further improvements.

## **Deloitte in Belgium**

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## **About the UCI**

Founded in 1900 in Paris (France), the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) is the worldwide governing body for cycling. It develops and oversees cycling in all its forms, for all people: as a competitive sport, a healthy recreational activity, a means of transport, and also just for fun. The UCI manages and promotes the nine cycling disciplines: road, track, mountain bike, BMX Racing, BMX Freestyle, cyclo-cross, trials, cycling esports and indoor cycling. Five of these are featured on the Olympic Games programme (road, track, mountain bike, BMX Racing and BMX Freestyle), two in the Paralympic Games (road and track) and four in the Youth Olympic Games (road, mountain bike, BMX Racing and BMX Freestyle). For more information: [www.uci.org](http://www.uci.org).

**The 2021 UCI Road World Championships** were made possible thanks to the Flemish government (via EVENTFLANDERS), the participating cities and the province of Flemish Brabant. EVENTFLANDERS operates within Tourism Flanders and is a collaboration of Tourism Flanders, the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Culture, Youth and Media and Sport Flanders.



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