



The Importance of Former Railway Lines and Cross-border Connections
EGWA – 20th anniversary, June 29th 2018, Namur, Belgium

Geographical Situation

- Europe's **longest, cross-border** cycle path on disused railways
- **125 km**
- **3 countries:** Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg
- **2 INTERREG-programmes**
- Complete **tourism product**



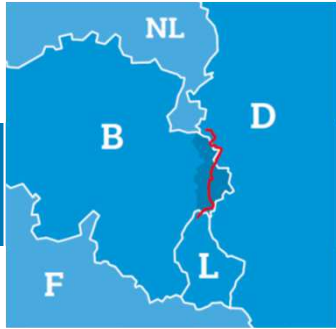
The Aim of the Project

- Extensive cross-border cycle path
- Backbone as a North-South axis
- 2 main branch-lines as an East-West axis



RAVeL Network Wallonia





The Benefits of a Greenway



- Average gradients $> 1.5\%$
- Non-motorized traffic
- Safety
- Awareness Raising

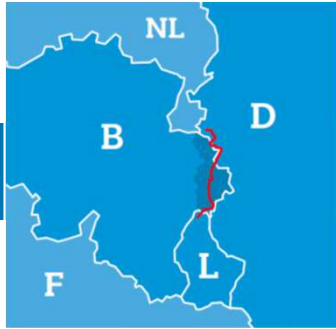


The Potential of Cycle Tourism

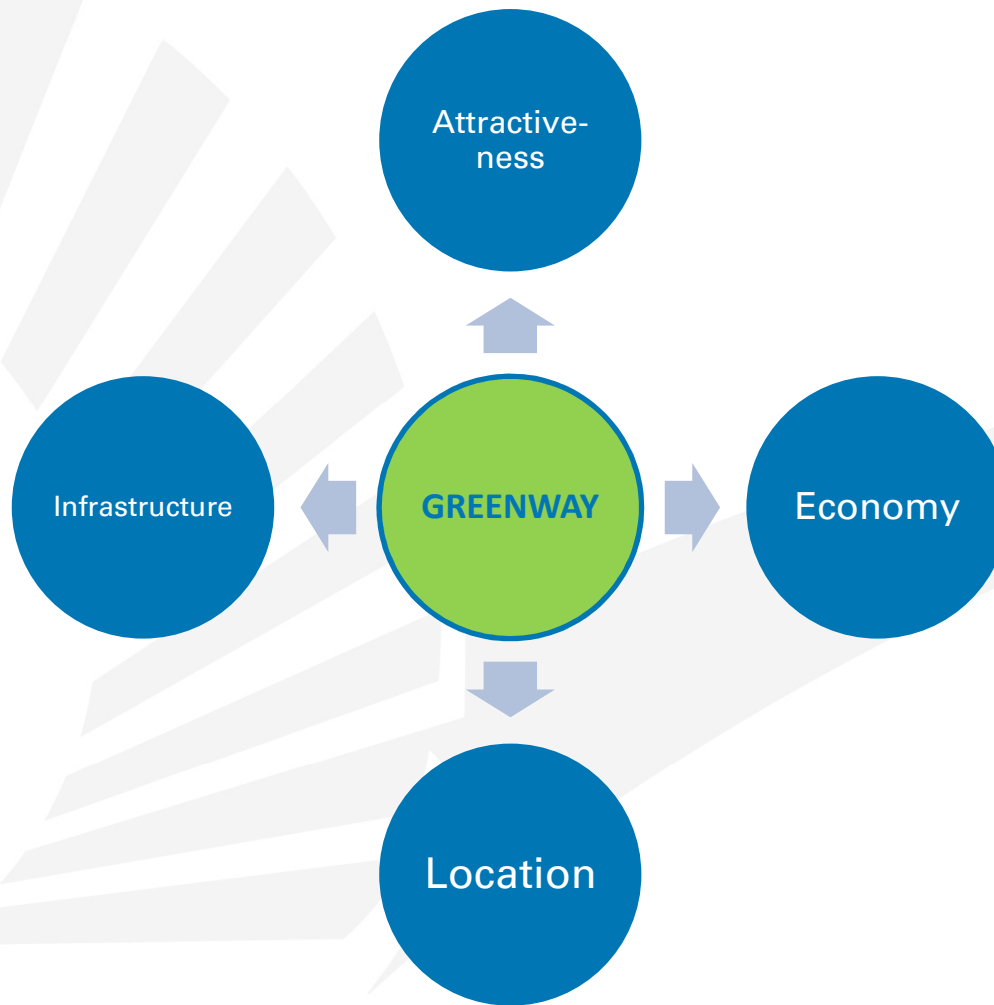


Cycle Tourism...

1. Creates Jobs
2. Reinforces economic structures in rural areas
3. Is getting more and more popular due to the demographic shift
4. Enables numerous synergies
5. Contributes to the attainment of climate protection goals



The Economic and Location Factor



Measurement of Success

- **Increased Awareness** as cycling destination
- More than **350,000 counts** recorded in 2015
- **Occupancy rate** increased up to **20%**
- **Cycling package tours** almost **tripled**
- **Tour operators** from the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany



Sustainable Cooperation

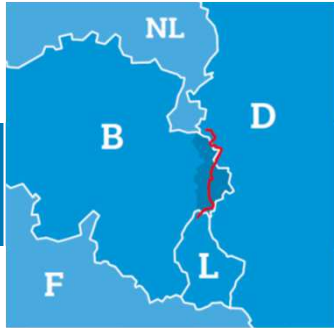
- 
- **Cross-border cooperation** beyond the end of the project
 - **Regular meetings**
 - **Valuable contacts**
 - **Cross-border cooperation** between the different **emergency services**
 - **Quality management system**



Quality

- **** ADFC-Quality Route 2018
- 1st certification in 2015
- Top scores in Safety and Infrastructure



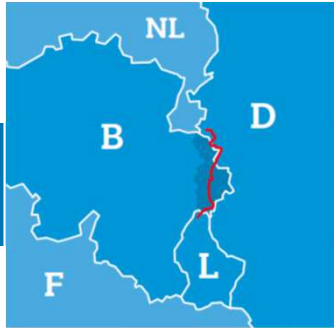


bed+bike-Label



- **Bike-friendly** accommodation
- From 23 to **43 certified** accommodations
- **Equality** with “Bikes Welcome”





The Other Side of the Coin

2016

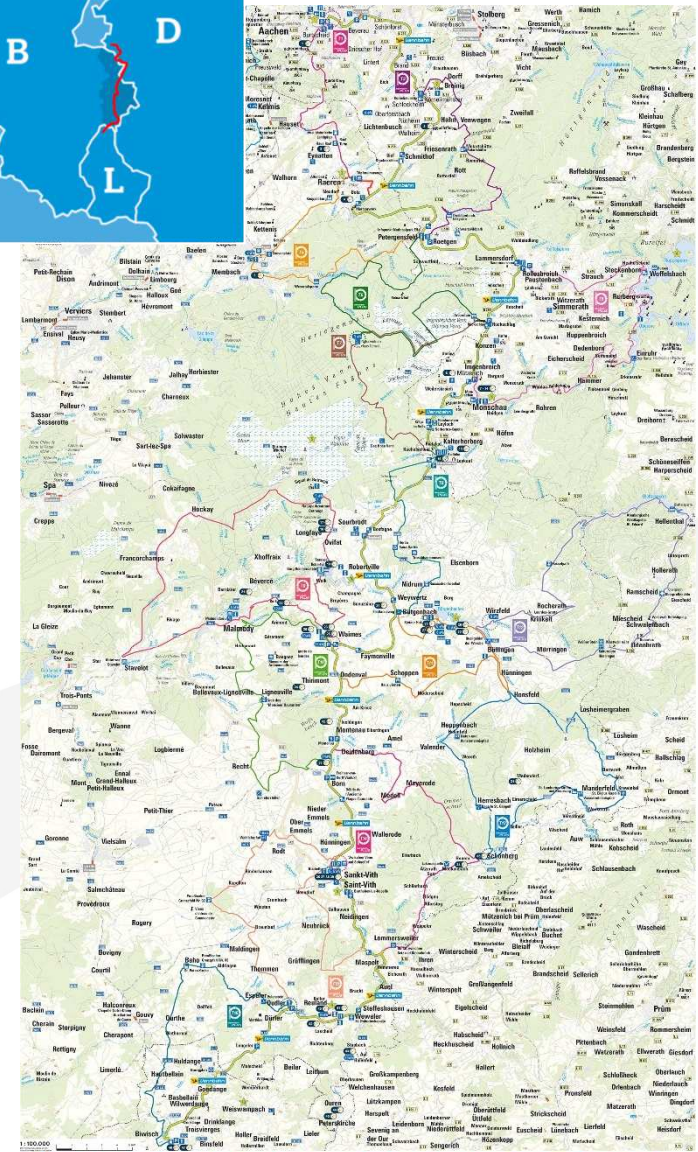
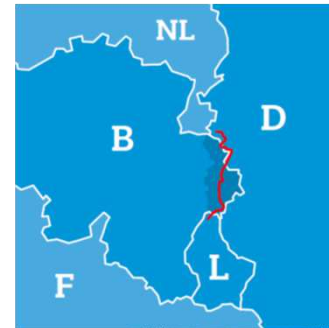


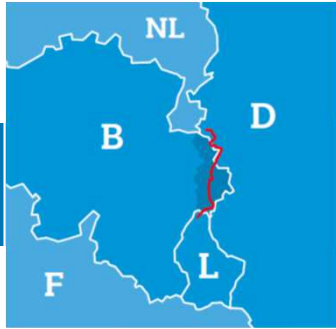
2017

- **17% decrease** of the number of cycle tourists in 2017 (ADFC Bicycle Travel Analysis 2018)
- **Unfavourable** climatic conditions
- **Decrease** of the number of cycle tourists on the Vennbahn

Countermeasures

- Further development of the product
- Increased integration of other routes
- New focus on marketing
- Seeking new markets





Outlook

- Establishment of a transnational **Vennbahn office**
- **Quality assurance** of the tourism product
- **Promotion and consolidation** of the whole European Greenways Network

THANK YOU VERY
MUCH FOR YOUR
ATTENTION!



www.vennbahn.eu



www.ostbelgien.eu



© vennbahn.eu_D. Ketz