



## EUROPEAN GREENWAYS INFO

### New EGWA period: sustaining the future

The Secretariat transfers and the creation of a new executive seat in Madrid, the appointment of a new director, and a renewed team directly elected was the first phase for the EGWA new period in 2009, the year of change, transition and redeployment.

It was also the year of the 4th European Greenways Award, with the support of the German-speaking Community of Belgium, the Walloon region, the Spanish Foundation for Biodiversity, and the DG of Enterprise and Industry of the EU giving this award the quality it deserves.

In 2010, EGWA celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Lille Declaration; this fundamental charter defined, for the first time, the concept of greenways at European level, which has been widely spread in our continent, thanks especially to the dynamism and the action of our members. We have celebrated this period by organising, in partnership with the Spanish Railways Foundation, the V European Greenways Conference, that has revised the main contributions of the Greenways in terms of health, mobility, employment, revenue, rural development, active and sustainable tourism, and heritage protection.

We counted on the success of the conference with the invaluable support of Fundación Once, Fundación Biodiversidad, Ministère de l'Écologie de France, Walloon Region, Caixa Forum and the DG of Enterprise and Industry of the EU. EU's Environment Commissioner, Janez Potočnik, in a video message, emphasized the important contribution of Greenways to fight against climate change, and to move forward to a model of sustainable tourism and mobility.

Madrid's Declaration for a European Greenways' policy resulting of the conference reflects the intention of advancing in the development of a "European Green Network" and it will be the frontline for EGWA in the next few years.

For sure, there still are many challenges to overcome. But we are confident that, with the support of our partners, we will be able to continue working and developing arguments in favour of greenways, identifying and disseminating good practices and encouraging innovative initiatives, to show the real importance of this movement.

This new Newsletter is issued with such an objective. We hope it can be of interest to you and we hope that we can count on your support.

*Gilbert Perrin*  
President

*Carmen Aycart*  
Secretary General

*Mercedes Muñoz*  
Director



Picture: V European Greenways Conference, opening ceremony. A. González, President of ADIF (railways infrastructure manager) - J. Blanco, Spanish Public Works Minister - P. Ortún Director "New Approach Industries, Tourism and CSR" of the DG of Enterprise and Industry of the European Commission - J. Barreiro managing director of the Spanish Railways Foundation (SRF) - G. Perrin, EGWA President

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The main objectives of the European Greenways Association (EGWA), founded in 1998, are to make an inventory of, promote and encourage infrastructures referred to as greenways.

## News from Members

### Belgium - Chemins du Rail: think locally, act on the European level



One of our missions is to follow the cross-border links of these projects. Some of them we have launched or to which we cooperate are about to be finalized and we are especially glad about this. Some examples are:

- The Vennbahn project, a 130 km rail-trail between Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg, co-financed through the Interreg IV programme (to be completed in 2012);
- A "Lakes Cycle Route" between two tourist resorts, one in Wallonia, the other one in the French Département du Nord;
- A continuous sign posting between the Liège area and the German border in the direction of Aachen.

Picture: Towards Aachen, panel of the 3 borders

Co-founder of the European Greenways Association (EGWA), the Belgian association Chemins du Rail (chemin du rail = rail-trail) contribute very closely to the development of the RAVeL, the greenways network of the Walloon Region, and of many local projects connected with slow mobility.

This means many meetings, coordination processes and compromises. But building Europe means also building greenways and cycle routes. A lot of work but worth it.

[www.cheminsdurail.be](http://www.cheminsdurail.be)



### France- Published the "Guide to Cycle Routes and Greenways in France"

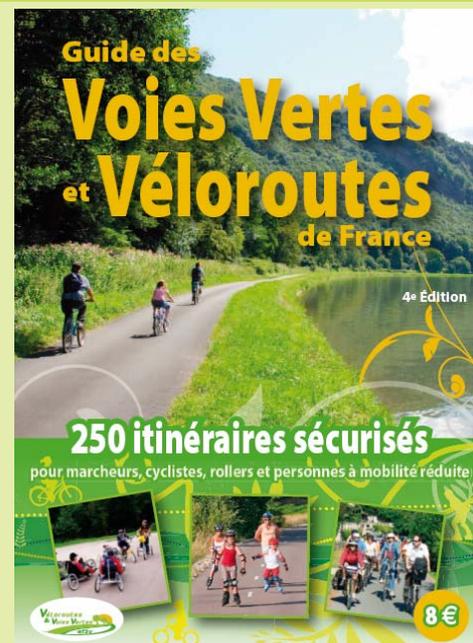
The 4th edition of the Guide has been published in August, 2010 by the French Association for the Development of Cycle routes and Greenways (AF3V)

The new "Guide to Cycle Routes and Greenways in France" is ready and with more than 250 adapted routes.

It describes the greenways of more than 12 km, and the cycle routes of more than 80km. A map of France gives information of each cycle route and greenway number so they are easy to find within the map.

You will find, for each itinerary, length, a description of the surrounding landscapes, road surface, services, public transport access, published documentation, and other useful information. It has all been evaluated by the users.

Guide format A5, coloured, 144 pages.  
Price: 8€ plus postage (3,15€ within France, 4€ rest of Europe)



Please demand on the AF3V link:

<http://www.af3v.org/Guide-des-VVV-de-France.html>

Or, through the Internet [www.cartovelo.com](http://www.cartovelo.com)



## News from Members

### France —New Edition of the “National Atlas of Cycle Routes and Greenways”

The Departments & Region's of Cycling network (DRC French initials) publish the second National Atlas of Cycle Routes and Greenways (July, 2010) in partnership with the French minister of Ecology.

This 2010 overview of the Cycle Routes and Greenways shows that France has a 19,500 km national network, of which 6,150km are part of the European itineraries.

In July 2010, 35% of this national network were open, which means some 6 900 km altogether. The French cycle routes and greenways are developing day by day. Its execution is carried out by local or regional authorities who estimate the interest of those itineraries for soft mobility and tomorrow's tourism.

The 2010 atlas is a Guide previously unpublished of the National Observatory of Cycle Routes and Greenways (ON3V), a geographical information system planned and executed by the DRC, and financed by French minister of Ecology.

The 2010 Atlas and the ON3V are addressed

to the State services, territorial departments and public administration. It is also at the disposal of the French Association for the development of Cycle routes and Greenways (AF3V), partner in this project.



More info:

[www.departements-cyclables.org/](http://www.departements-cyclables.org/) / section VV

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### Ireland — Huge turnout for Newcastle West-Rathkeale railway walks



Picture: The GST Group at Newcastle West Old Station House on National Trails Day.

National Trails Day [Sunday 3rd October] was the occasion used to celebrate the latest extension to the Great Southern Trail (GST). In excess of 100 people of all ages from West Limerick, North Kerry and further afield enjoyed an 8 mile [13km] walk in pleasant autumnal conditions between Newcastle West and Rathkeale.

The portion of the route from Ardagh to Rathkeale has recently been cleared of vegetation and prepared for public use by the GST with grant aid from the Dept. of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs.

For first time in the twenty year existence of the GST it is possible to utilise the 22 miles of the old railway between Abbeyfeale and Rathkeale for recreation. Mr. O'Mahony Chairman of the GST thanked all the stalwarts who had campaigned for the GST throughout the 1990s and the various State and Local agencies for their support in recent years. He noted that the entire Ballingrane Junction [near Rathkeale] to Tralee railway route is now part of the National Cycle Route strategy.

Next Christmas walk on Monday dec.27th at 1pm from Newcastle to Rathkeale with complimentary return transport.

More info:

[www.southerntrail.net.](http://www.southerntrail.net.) ;

[southerntrail@eircom.net](mailto:southerntrail@eircom.net)



## News from Members

### Portugal- Some news about the Portuguese Greenways Association - APCV

The APCV is trying to influence the implementation of the Greenways concept in Portugal. From its foundation in 2001 onwards some important initiatives that took place must be mentioned:

- At academic levels, Master and Ph.D. dissertations took place or are taking place.
- International conferences have been organized.
- Environmental case studies have been designed

Similar initiatives are already scheduled for a near future including 2011.

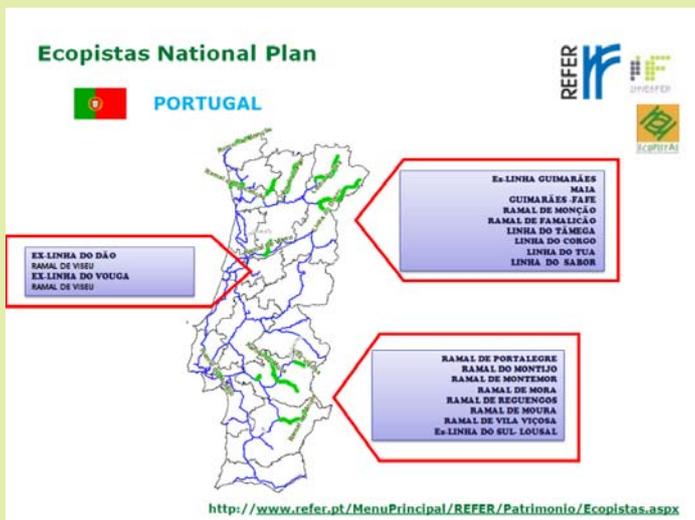
Our thesis is that Greenways networks fulfil important roles concerning the management of natural environments, the conservation and enhancement of local heritage, the economic and social development. Greenways can favour commuting, weekends and tourist travels when non-motorised routes are integrated into the management of urban and rural areas.

From its beginnings the "Portuguese Greenways Association" is trying to be a good partner. To promote the diffusion of the existing experiments, according to its Statutes, and to offer technical support to entities or groups of citizens who wish to implement the Greenways concept, is one of the main goals that we want to fulfil.

*J. Reis Machado (President)*



### Portugal - 61 km of new greenways will soon be open for public use



initiative of REFER –Portuguese railway infrastructure manager - with the purpose of utilizing the railways no longer in use.

The implementation of the plan was carried out through agreements with the town councils whose territories are crossed by each of the lines and branch lines now out of use. REFER promotes the preparation of the preliminary studies that will be the base for the implementation of projects of each Ecopista. These are to be carried out by the municipalities of which the greenways pass through.

The National Plan of Ecopistas consists of 748 km eligible lines, of which, 449 km have already been put out to contract with the municipalities, and 580 km are provided with preliminary studies. There are 129 km already in use (2009) and with the two coming "ecopistas" 61 new km will be added for touristic use and sustainable mobility in the Portugal Net of Greenways.

From 2009, the Plan is administered by INVESFER, a state firm of the REFER group.

The "Ecopistas" of Amarante no Tamega and of Dao, (Viseu, Tondela and Santa Comba Dão) will be soon in use for public use. Both are part of the Portuguese National Plan of "Ecopistas", and their inauguration will be held end April 2011.

The National Plan of Ecopistas, rail to trail greenways in Portugal, was created by the



## News from Members

Spain - A cycle tourism loop will connect Girona and France, using a big part of the existing greenways network



The Consortium of the Greenways of Girona, the General Council of the Eastern Pyrenees, and the Conseil de Développement du Pays Pyrénées-Méditerranée develop the Enllaç [Link] project: a cycle network of 366 kilometres promoting sustainable tourist

mobility and reinforcing the links between the two territories.

The link will be composed of the existing Greenways network, some 150 km between the actual layout and that which is under construction, 100 km of bike routes and Greenways in France, 35 km in Ripollès, 55 in the Alt Empordà and 30 in the Baix Empordà, approximately.

The total cost of the project is almost 1,650,000 Euros, with 65% financed by the European POCTEFA programme, which is 1,072,000 Euros. The rest is contributed by the three members. Consortium of the Greenways of Girona is the leader of the project.

More information:

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## Spain- Exhibition of Spanish Greenways at the Barcelona Olympic and Sports Museum

For the first time in Spain, the Barcelona Olympic and Sports Museum is host to an exhibition featuring "Greenways", thanks to the collaboration between the Spanish Railways Foundation (FFE) and other institutions. The exhibition, which will be open until 10 January 2011, features information panels and approximately 50 photos of old railway lines which have been recovered as motor traffic-free trails for open-air recreational activities. Information and photographs of Greenways have also been added to the Olympic and Sports Museum's permanent collection, so that the Greenway facilities can take their place alongside the other sports equipment and facilities featured.

Also, 18 half-hour programmes of the television series about Greenways entitled "Vive la Vía" ("Live the Greenways") will be shown. The series, owned by the FFE, has been broadcast a number of times on TVE, the state-owned TV channel, as well as on other channels.

We remind that the FFE has held the position as General Secretary of the European Greenways Association and has hosted the Madrid office of the EGWA since November 2008.

More information:

[www.viasverdes.com](http://www.viasverdes.com) ; [prensavv@ffe.es](mailto:prensavv@ffe.es)



## News from Members

### U.K.—National Cycle Network Celebrates 15 years



Picture: 'J Bewley/Sustrans' Early morning journey to school & commuters on traffic-free greenway through housing area (Bristol & Bath Railway Path, National Route 4).

12,600 miles, 407 million journeys by foot and bike, 3 million users. September marked the 15th Anniversary of the National Cycle Network. It carries more than a million walking and cycling journeys every single day.

The Network includes a mixture of quiet lanes, on-road routes and traffic-free paths that are often a great way to get to work, school, the shops or just for exercise and fun. The Network is available to everyone and passes within a mile of 57% of the population. The first route was the Bristol and Bath Railway Path, a 17-mile traffic-free trail along a disused railway.

Network also hosts the largest collection of outdoor art and sculpture in the UK - with over 2,000 pieces from over 300 artists.

National Cycle Network has been developed and built by Sustrans alongside many local authorities and partners across the UK, and is a flagship project for Sustrans - the UK charity that enables people to make more of their everyday journeys on foot, bike and public transport.

More info:

[www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

[press@sustrans.org.uk](mailto:press@sustrans.org.uk)



## AGENDA

~ **EGWA General Assembly,  
Seville (Spain) March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2011**



Picture: EGWA members with the Director of Tourism of the European Commission, in the last General Assembly, in Brussels (2009)



ASSOCIATION EUROPÉENNE DES VOIES VERTES · EUROPEAN GREENWAYS ASSOCIATION · ASOCIACIÓN EUROPEA DE VÍAS VERDES - AISBL

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Greenways: "autonomous communication routes reserved exclusively for non-motorised journeys, developed in an integrated manner which enhances both the environment and quality of life of the surrounding area. These routes should meet satisfactory standards of width, gradient, and surface condition to ensure that they are both user-friendly and low-risk for users of all abilities. The use of disused railway lines and canal towpaths will be critical". Declaration of Lille, 12th September 2000