

# Measures for public consultation

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GOVERNMENT OF MALTA  
MINISTRY FOR TRANSPORT,  
INFRASTRUCTURE AND CAPITAL PROJECTS

## National Cycling Strategy





# Foreword by the Minister for Transport, Infrastructure, and Capital Projects Aaron Farrugia

The **Maltese Government is committed to developing a Cycling Strategy** as one of the elements supporting the transition towards a climate neutral island by 2050, reducing congestion on our streets, improving our urban environment, reducing emissions and pollution while developing a healthier lifestyle for all.

With the dual crises of climate change and urban congestion impacting the quality of life of our citizens, there has never been a more critical time to further promote cycling as a viable and essential part of our transport ecology. As Government, we also recognise the tremendous opportunities that cycling offers as an alternative mode of transport on the Maltese islands.

We envision a future where cycling is not just an activity for the weekend enthusiast but a safe day-to-day option for commuting and for mobility in general.

To this end, this **consultation document** aims to present a comprehensive list of measures and standards designed to promote safe cycling throughout the Maltese islands. The Government seeks your opinion through the **targeted questionnaire**.

Individuals, businesses and associations are all invited to contribute. The results of the questionnaire will be taken into consideration in the drafting of Malta's National Cycling Strategy which the Government intends to finalise by the end of 2023.

The measures presented herein cover a wide range of initiatives and are grouped into three main categories: infrastructures & bicycles, rules & safety, and information & awareness. The Cycling Strategy, of which these measures will be an integral part of, intends to achieve **the following key policy objectives**:

- a measurable modal shift from private vehicles to bicycles
- an improvement in air quality
- a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions
- a healthier lifestyle
- a more liveable urban environment

**The time for change is now, and our Cycling Strategy aims to be the roadmap that will lead us into a sustainable and connected future.**



# National Cycling Strategy: an overview of planned measures

## 1. Infrastructure & Bicycles

### Short term measures

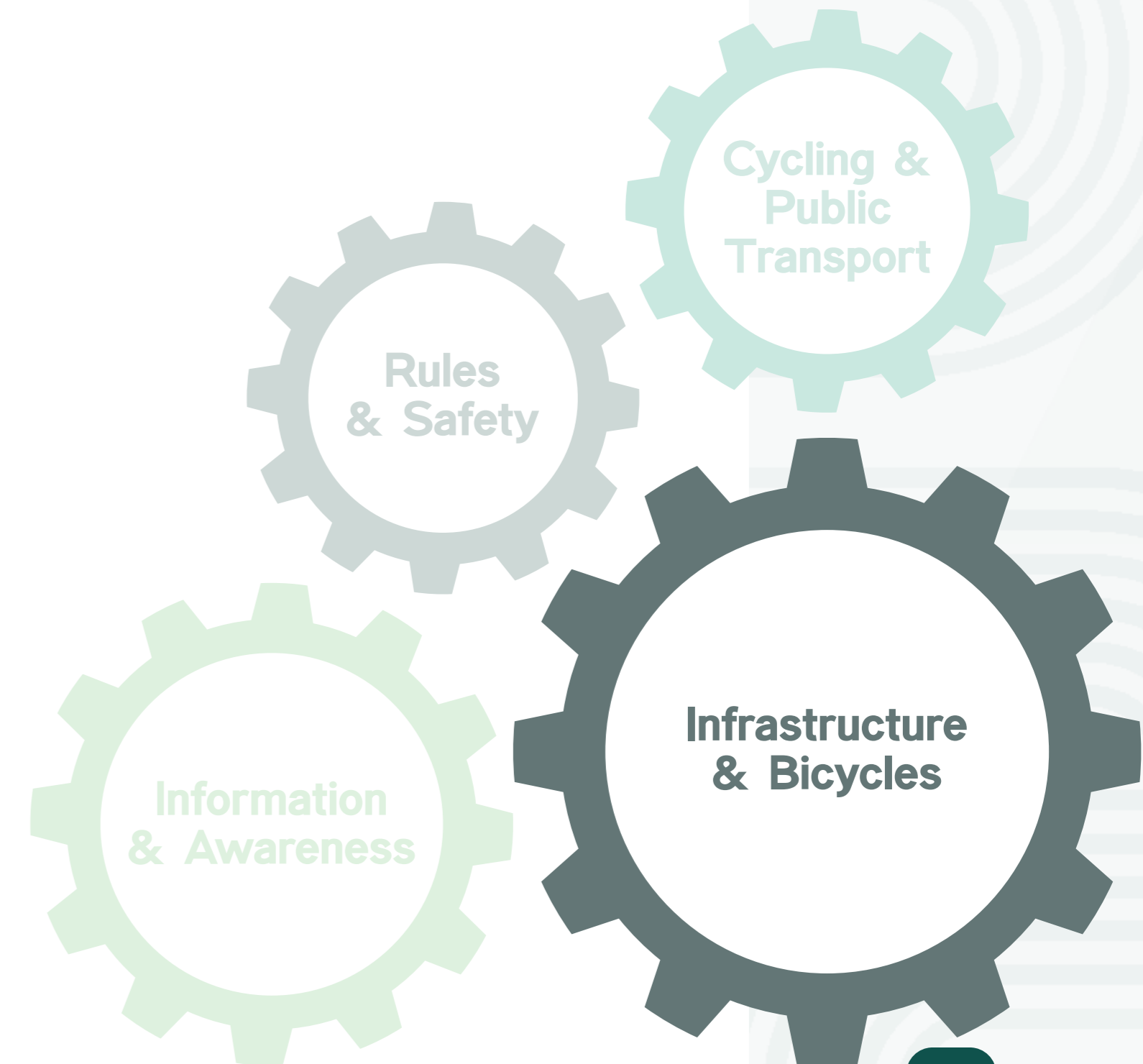
1. Connected network of cycling routes
2. GIS platforms
3. Temporary Traffic Management
4. New developments by the Planning Authority
5. Minimum standards to address cycling mobility needs
6. Standardised repair jobs

### Short to medium term measures

7. Cycling considerations in SUMP and SULPs
8. Incentives for pedelecs (e-bikes)
9. Cargo Bikes and E-Cargo Bikes
10. Cycle lane design

### Short term and continuous measures

11. Cycling Monitoring Units



# National Cycling Strategy: an overview of planned measures



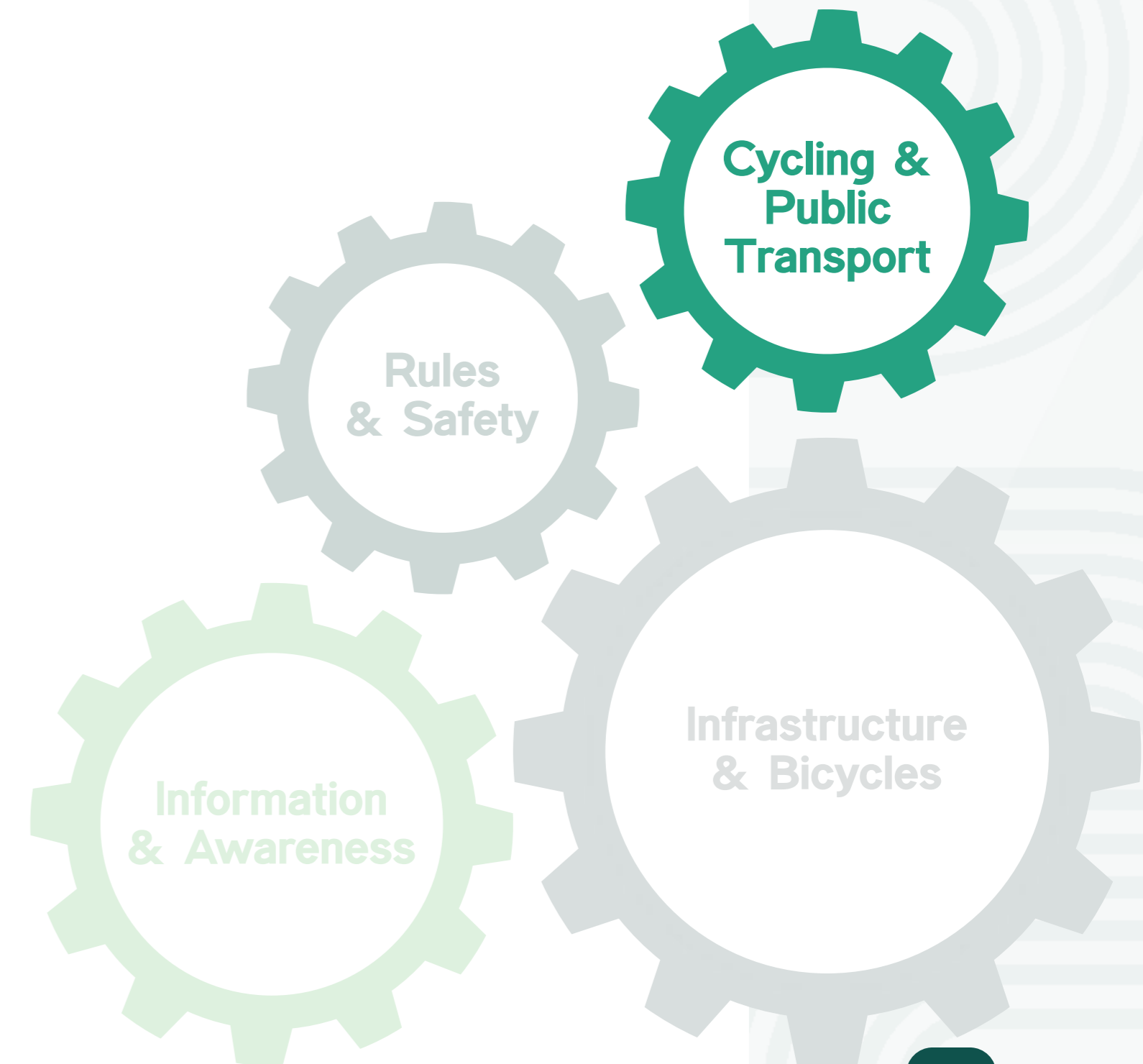
## 2. Cycling and Public Transport

### Short term measures

1. Cycling to Public Transport – First Mile Cycling
2. Public Transport to Cycling – Last Mile Cycling

### Short term and continuous measures

3. Public Transport and Cycling – Bikes on Buses





# National Cycling Strategy: an overview of planned measures

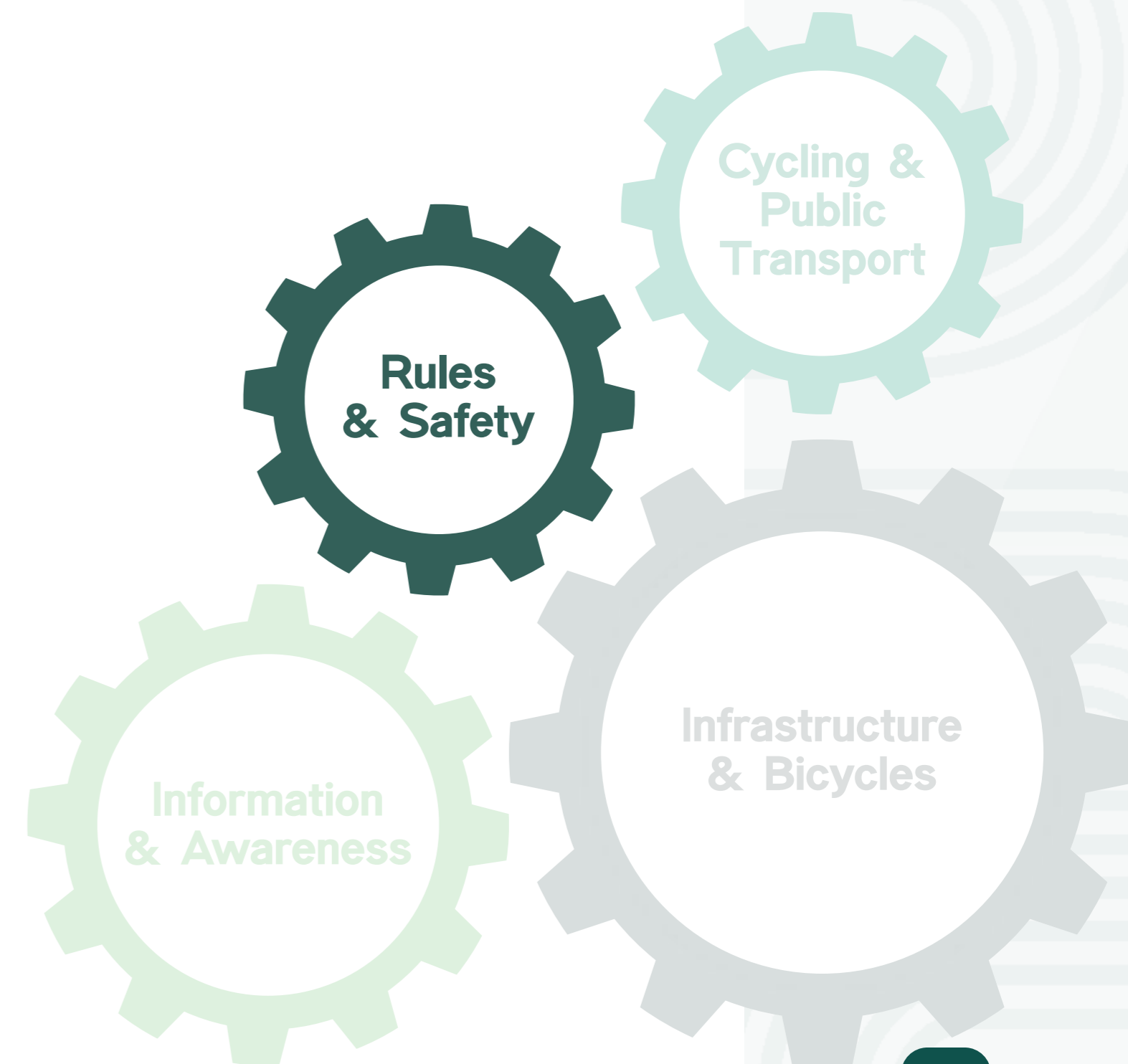
## 3. Rules & Safety

### Short to medium term measures

1. Responsibilities of larger vehicles
2. Safety of cycling and micro mobility

### Continuous measures

3. Speed limits to protect cyclists
4. Update to national legislation
5. The safety bubble
6. Infrastructure inspection and audit checklist
7. Residential and Urban Safe Route Network
8. Intelligent cats' eyes





# National Cycling Strategy: an overview of planned measures

## 4. Information & Awareness

### Short term measures

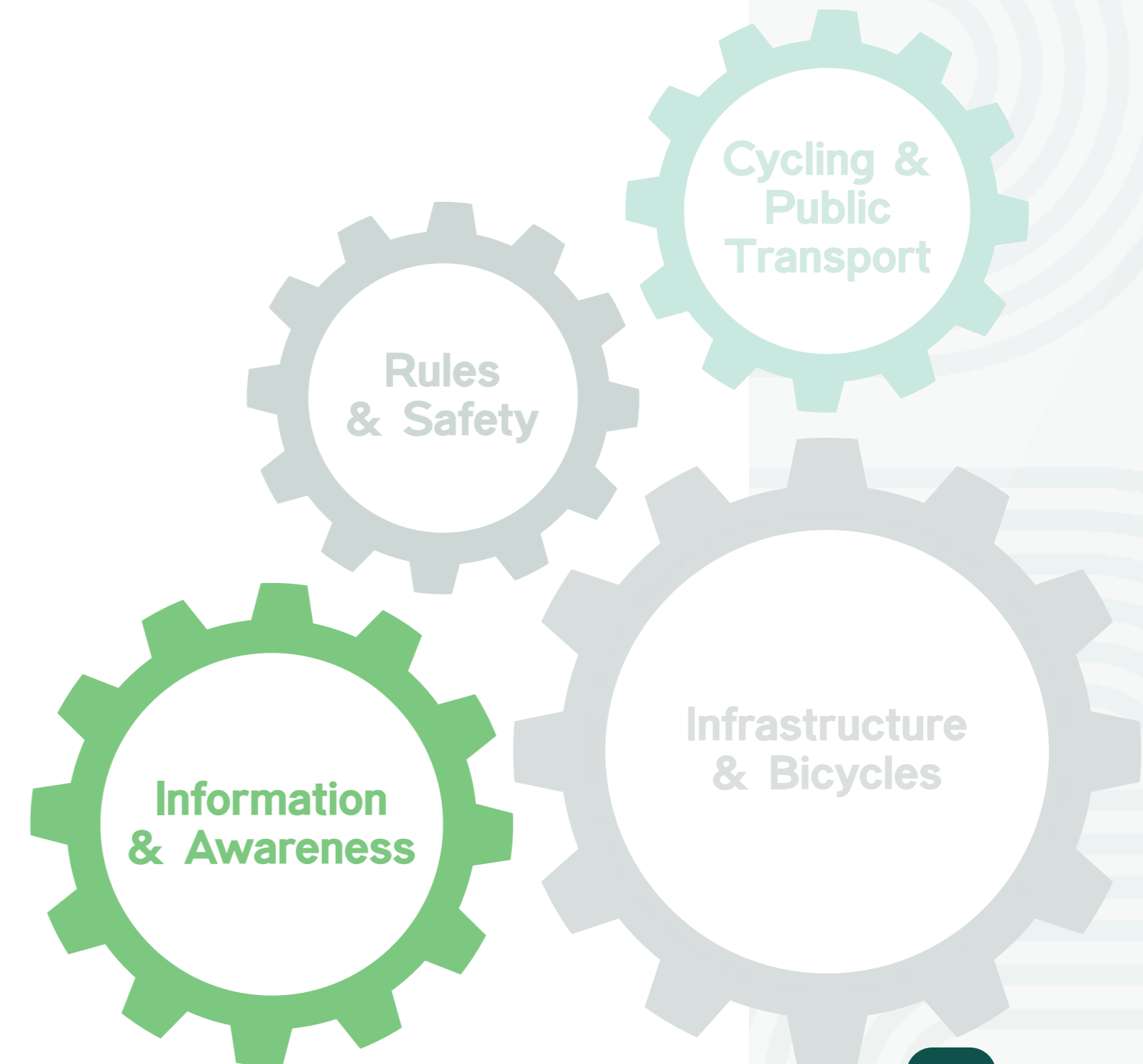
1. Cycling in Green Travel Plans
- 2 & 3. Training programmes for adults and children

### Continuous measures

6. National Cycling Route Network Display
7. Cycling awareness raising campaign
8. Continuous promotional cycling campaigns
- 9 & 10. Promotion of awareness of the change in legislation

### Short to medium term measures

4. Safe cycling routes to schools
5. Information repository for cyclists



# 1. Infrastructure and bicycles – Measure 1

## Short term

### 1.1 The National Cycling Route Network

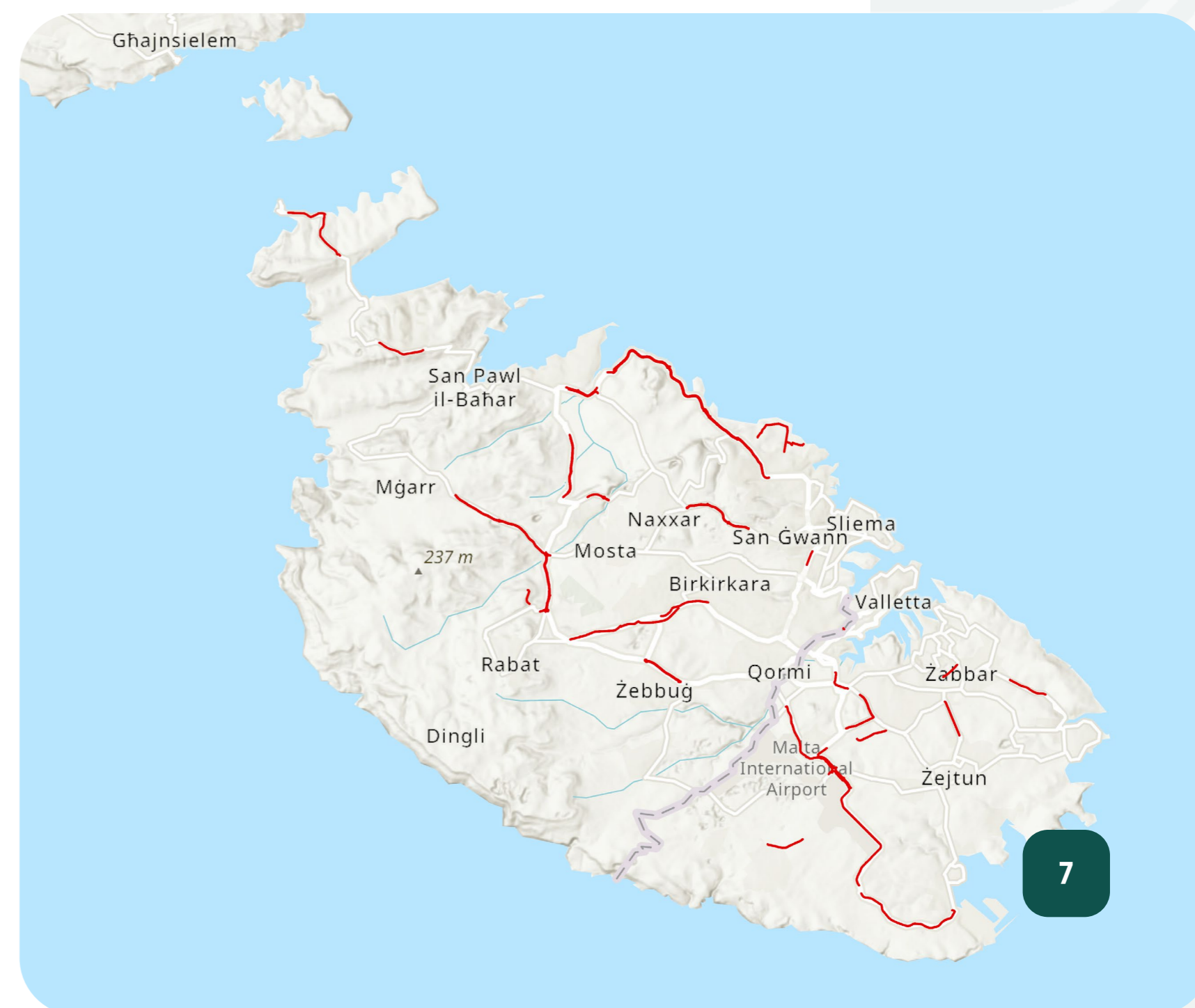
A study will be launched immediately with the aim of identifying, within 6 months, routes and connectivity issues that need to be addressed when developing the National Cycling Route Network (NCRN). The NCRN will be implemented overtime by incorporating and interconnecting the existing cycling routes in Malta and Gozo with newly created infrastructure with the aim of expanding the NCRN throughout the country. The NCRN will integrate both cycle routes along distributor and arterial roads as well as cycling networks designed in the C-SAM - Connections for Safer Active Mobility project, large infrastructural projects, and those planned by Local Councils within the framework of the Slow Streets initiative or other locally planned routes.

All new cycle route developments will be consistent with the NCRN, regardless of whether they are implemented by a Local Council or by a national agency (Transport Malta (TM), Infrastructure Malta (IM), Grand Harbour Regeneration Corporation (GHRC)), and will follow internationally established cycling infrastructure designs

The study will identify:

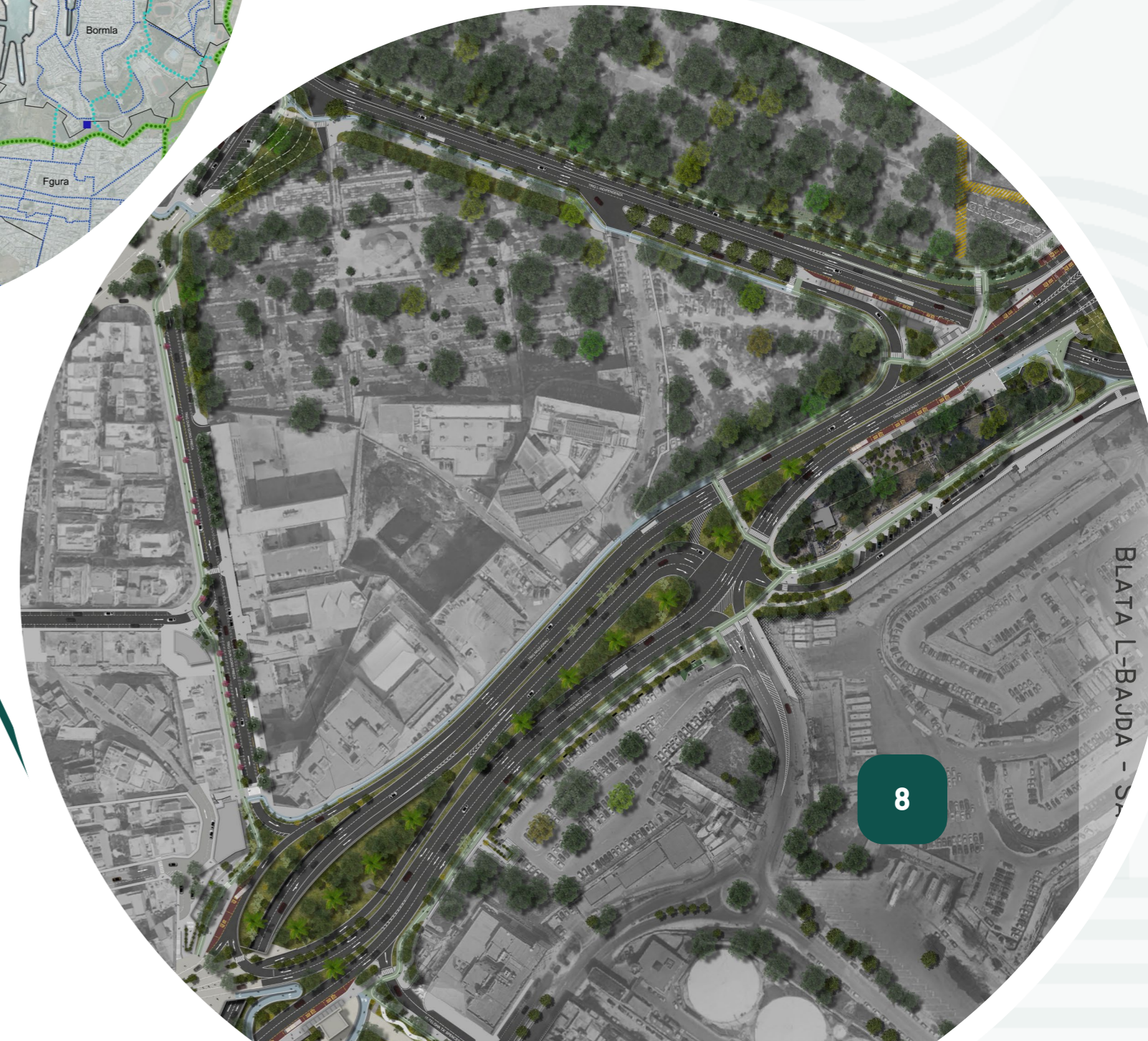
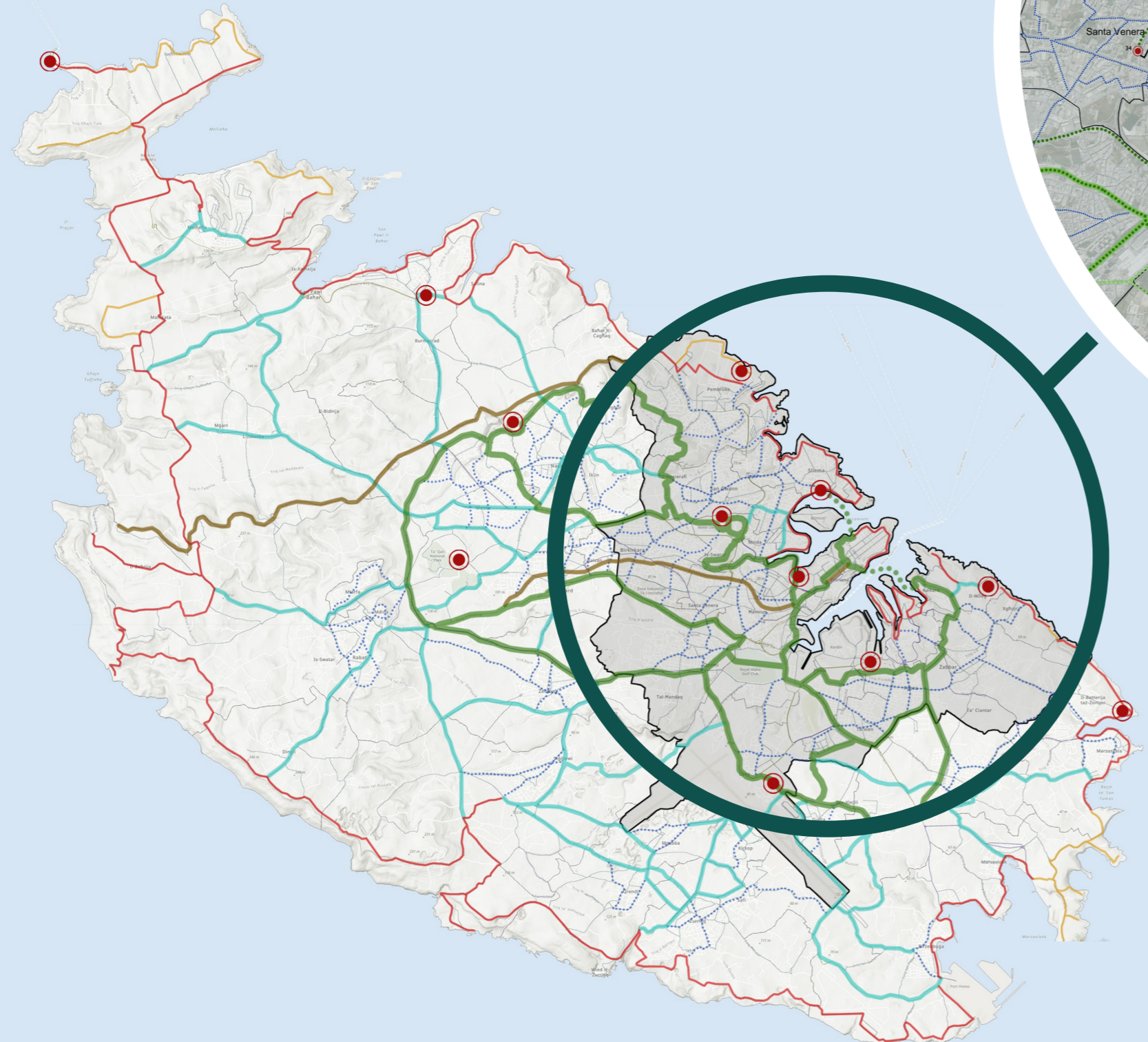
- routes leading to interconnections between and inside urban areas for commuting purposes;
- routes for touristic purposes identified in collaboration with the Malta Tourism Authority to promote Malta as a Cycling Tourism Destination; and
- routes for sport/workout purposes.

Map of existing cycling infrastructure in Malta



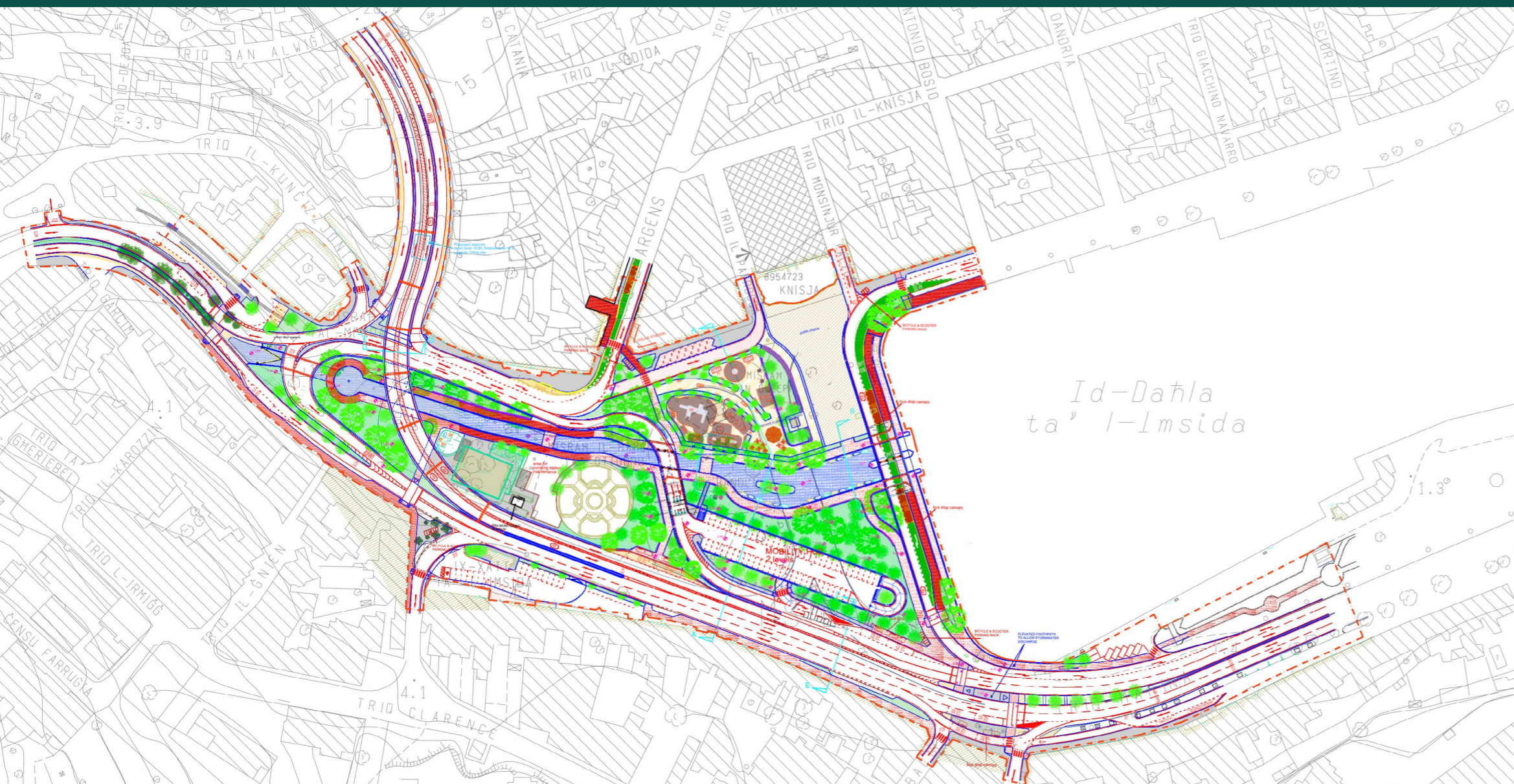
## Integration with C-SAM

Connections for Safer Active Mobility



## Integration of large infrastructural projects

The NCRN integrates with other large projects to achieve a consistent network

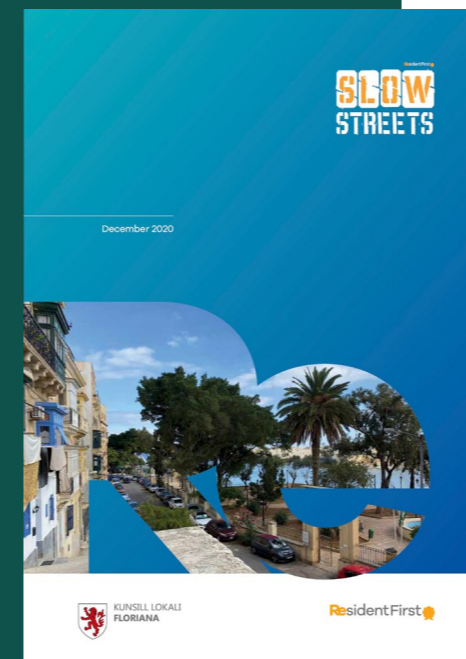
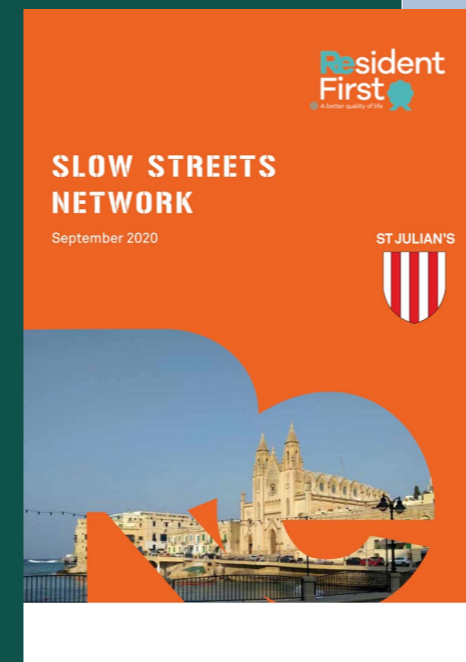


## Integration with Slow Streets

The NCRN integrates with the initiatives of Local Councils.

### SLOW STREETS CYCLING NETWORK

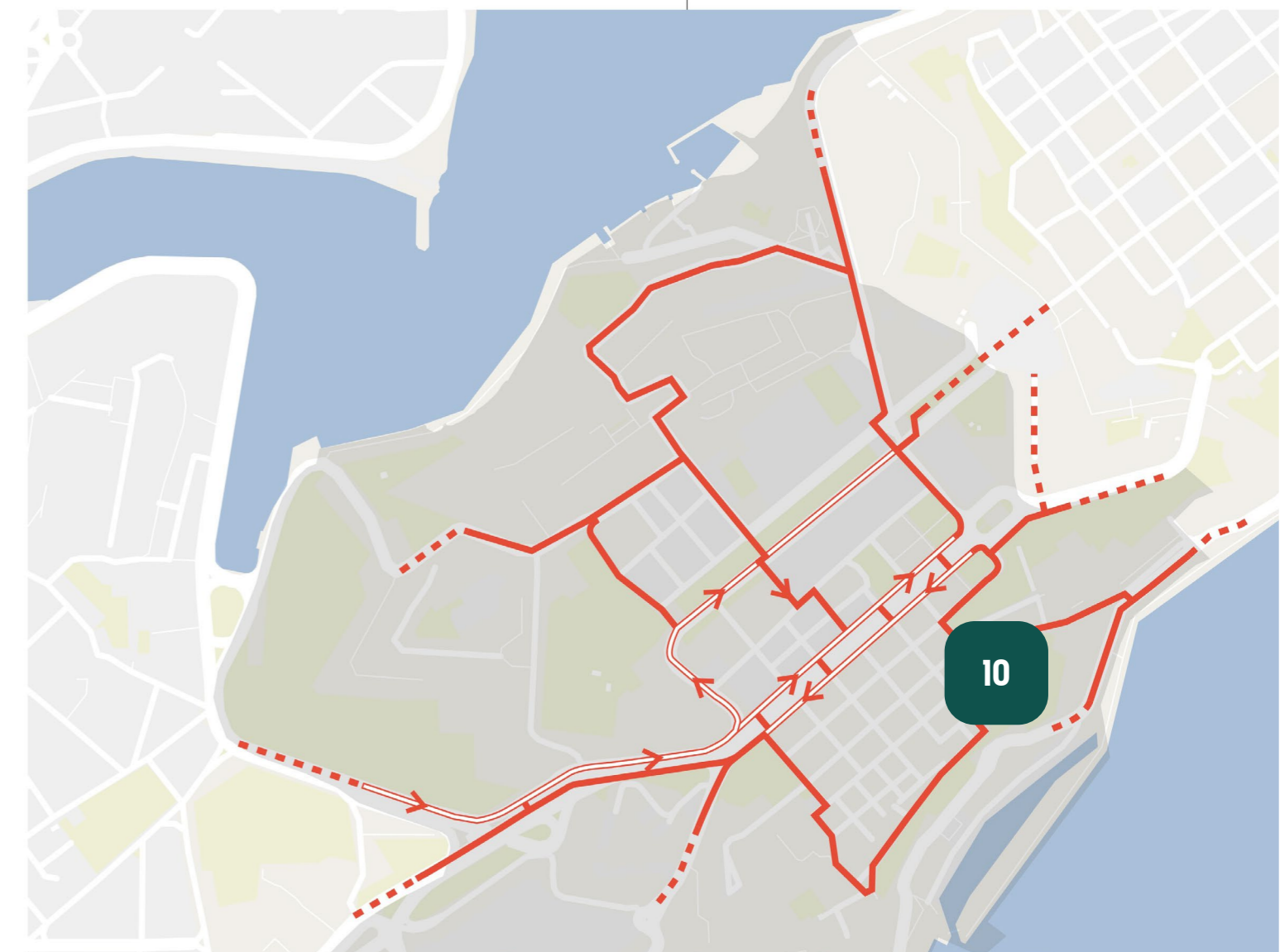
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### CYCLING NETWORK



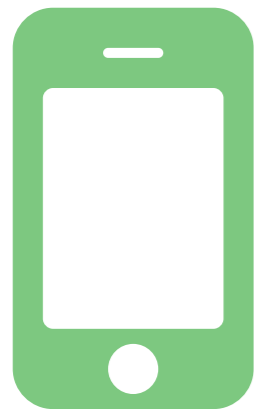
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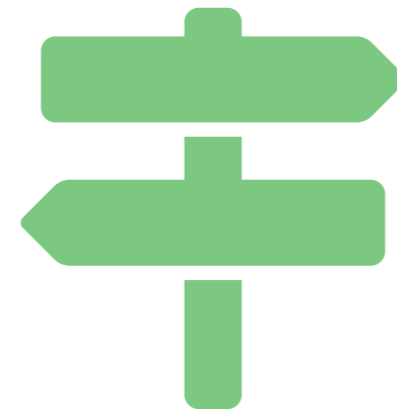
# 1. Infrastructure and bicycles – Measures 2 & 3

## Short term



### 1.2 GIS Platforms

A GIS (Geographic Information System) layer will be implemented for the NCRN so cyclists can find their desired route. We will also explore the possibility of linking the GIS with existing applications (e.g., Google Maps, Apple Maps, Strava, etc.) so cyclists can easily locate the NCRN on their devices.



### 1.3 Temporary Traffic Management during road construction works

Different options, including but not limited to temporary traffic management plans will be studied to ensure cyclists' safety in areas where construction projects are underway.

# 1. Infrastructure and bicycles – Measure 4

## Short term

### 1.4 New developments by the Planning Authority



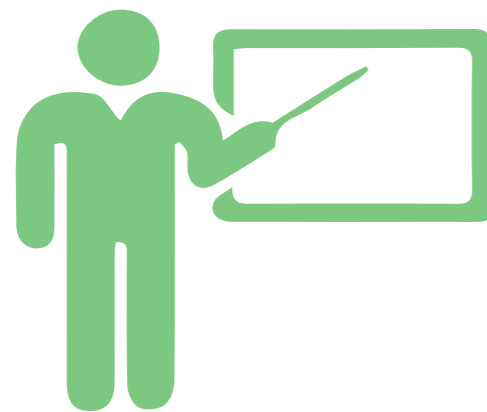
An assessment together with the Planning Authority will be made on how to broaden the development cycle, including on-street cycle parking, the necessary cycling infrastructure and facilities.



The assessment will include the optimisation of cyclists' safety for new developments.

# 1. Infrastructure and bicycles – Measures 5 & 6

## Short term



### 1.5 Minimum standards to address cycling mobility needs

The Planning Authority will explore the policy requirements in relation to the installation of bicycle stalls, shower and changing facilities at places of work and outside of shops and malls, where feasible. Government will lead by example and private companies with a transport manager obligation (i.e. with a number of employees above a certain threshold) will be required to provide such facilities at the place of work.



### 1.6 Accessibility of bicycle repair services

We will look into ways to ensure that costs for the most common repair jobs (e.g. fixing of brakes, of the transmission chain, changing of tires, etc.) for bicycles and e-bicycles are reasonable and ensure that such services would be readily available throughout Malta and Gozo.

# 1. Infrastructure and bicycles – Measures 7,8 & 9

## Short to medium term



### 1.7 Cycling in the Sustainable Mobility and Logistics Plans

Components related to the promotion of cycling and the use of e-cargo bikes will be included in the sustainable urban mobility and the sustainable logistics plans being prepared for all regions of Malta and Gozo.



### 1.8 Incentives for pedelecs (e-bikes)

An assessment will be made on the possible consolidation of incentive schemes to allow for the conversion of cargo bikes and bicycles to pedelecs.



### 1.9 Cargo Bikes and E-Cargo Bikes

The potential for facilitating the use of cargo bikes and e-cargo bikes will be investigated.





# 1. Infrastructure and bicycles

## Measure 10

### Short to medium term

#### 1.10 Cycle Lane Design

Cycle lane design guidance will be adopted according to internationally recognised designs and features adapted to the Maltese environment. In addition, specific designs will be adopted where spatial constraints do not allow for segregated or dedicated cycle lanes:

- Advanced stop lines at intersections to provide a safe and visible space for bicycle users ahead of queueing traffic during the red signal phase/or in traffic road junctions.
- Advisory cycle lanes marked with a broken white line.
- Trixi mirrors mounted at signal-controlled junctions.
- Road humps which do not extend for the full width of the road (up to the edge of the footway) along promoted and popular cycle links.
- Right of way for bicycles along the NCRN where sections of streets are not wide enough for a segregated lane or an advisory cycle lane (the pavement will be painted green with large markings on top).
- Storm water drainage systems will take cycling into account.

# 1. Infrastructure and bicycles – Measure 11 Short term and continuous



## 1.11 Cycling Monitoring Units

Where feasible, automated cycling monitoring units will be installed along the National Cycling Route Network to monitor trends, patterns and volumes. This is a tool that will allow public authorities to measure modal shift, and assist in network planning.

The number of monitoring units will gradually increase each year to refine both the local and the national statistical weight factor of cycling in transport.



## 2. Cycling and public transport – Measures 1 & 2

### Short term



#### 2.1 Cycling to Public Transport – First Mile Cycling

Bus stops and interchanges will be identified where cycling would represent the first-mile for reaching public transport hubs, including ferry landings. The possibility to install safe and secure bike stalls in key hubs will be examined to ensure that cycling is integrated with public transport.



#### 2.2 Public Transport to Cycling – Last Mile Cycling

Bus stops and interchanges will be identified where cycling would represent the last-mile for reaching places of interest from public transport hubs, including from ferry landings. The case for bike sharing services will be examined in key locations. Last mile cycling in industrial estates will be examined as part of Green Travel Plans.

## 2. Cycling and public transport – Measure 3

### Short term and continuous

#### 2.3 Public Transport and Cycling – Bikes on Buses

An assessment will be made, jointly with Malta Public Transport (MPT), on the possible provision of facilities for cyclists to make use of public transport on their journey (e.g., being able to board and accommodate a bicycle) on select bus routes and at specific bus stops.



# 3. Rules and Safety – Measures 1 & 2 Short to medium term

## 3.1 Responsibilities of Large Vehicles

- We will assess the possibility of developing infrastructure that takes into consideration how larger vehicles apply aerodynamic forces on bicycle users in a close pass resulting in falls .
- Certain vehicles may cause more damage/harm than others in the event of a road collision and a concerted effort will be made to ensure that all road users understand this responsibility. Infrastructure will be developed according to the Hierarchy of Vulnerability of all Road Users.

## 3.2 Safety of Cycling and Micro Mobility

- Speed restrictions and cycling infrastructures will be introduced, where necessary, to increase safety for cyclists and other micro mobility road users.



## 3. Rules and Safety – Measures 3,4 & 5

### Continuous



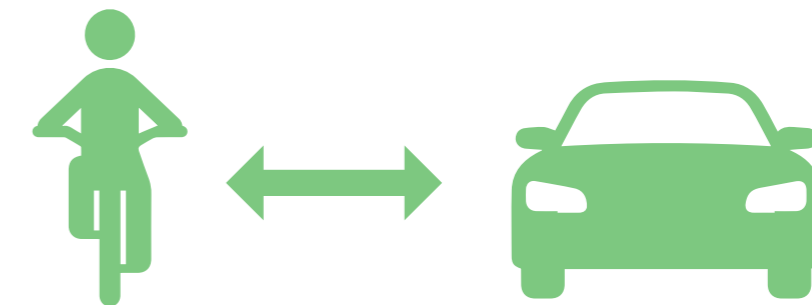
#### 3.3 Speed limits to protect cyclists

Speed limits in Urban areas will be implemented in particular areas where people work, cycle and play, keeping in mind that areas typically frequented by cyclists should be designated at 30 km/h or less, in particular on streets which will form part of the NCRN. Such limits will be established in cooperation with Local Councils in the frameworks of their respective Slow Streets plans.



#### 3.4 Update to national legislation

National legislation will be updated to address the regulation of speeds in cycle friendly streets and shared pedestrian footpaths; helmet usage will also be regulated.

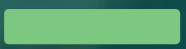



#### 3.5 The safety bubble

In streets where there is no dedicated bicycle infrastructure, we will introduce measures that enable the safe sharing of the road by all users, including motorists and bicycle riders.

# 3. Rules and Safety – Measures 6, 7 & 8

## Continuous

1   
2   
3 

### 3.6 Infrastructure inspection and audit checklist

We will consider establishing cyclability audits and the introduction of a checklist for road safety inspections.



### 3.7 Residential and Urban Safe Route Network

As a complement to the National Cycling Route Network, a Safe Route Network through fine grained residential streets and the urban core of various towns will be assessed. Speed limits in the Safe Route Network would be calibrated with the speed of all road users.



### 3.8 Intelligent Cat's Eyes

Intelligent “cat’s eyes” will be placed along critical commuter cyclist routes.



# 4. Information and Awareness - Measures 1, 2 & 3

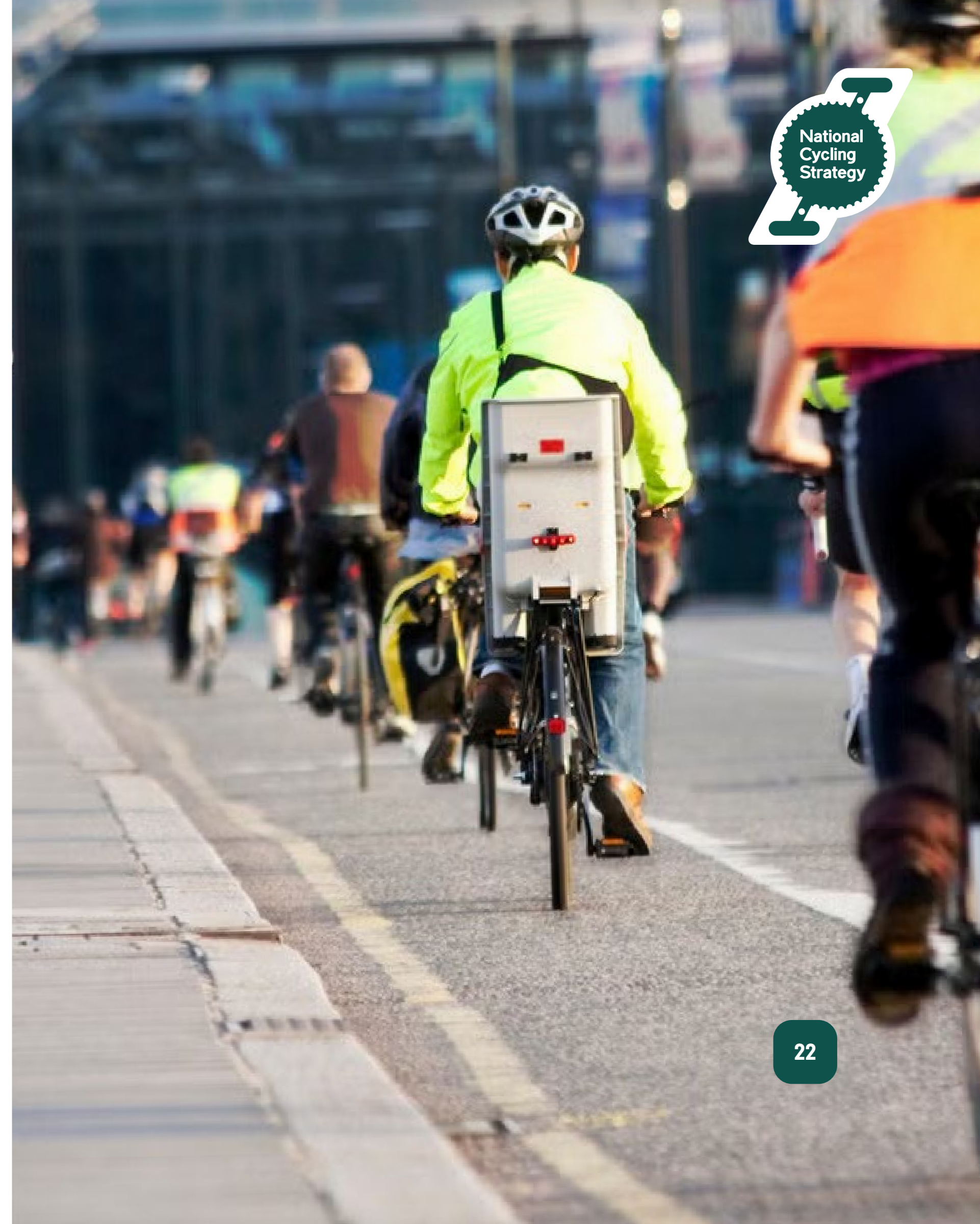
## Short term

### 4.1 Cycling in Green Travel Plans

- Develop incentives for the Introduction of Green Travel Plans that encourage cycling for commuting and we will assess the possibility of introducing transport managers in entities.
- The case for bike sharing services will be examined in key industrial estates where it would cover the internal part of the estate

### 4.2 & 4.3 Training Programs for adult and children

- We will collaborate with motorcycling schools, Local Councils and other related institutions to establish and provide training programs for cycling for those who use bicycles for professional purposes (e.g. delivery services) and those who want to commute to work, including training for night time use of the bicycle.
- We will collaborate with educational institutions in order to assess the possibility to introduce training to school children, including traffic awareness classes.



## 4. Information and Awareness – Measures 4, 5 & 6

### Short to medium term



#### 4.4 Safe Cycling Routes to School

Pilot projects for safe cycling routes to schools and educational establishments in collaboration with stakeholders will be developed. Where possible, bicycle parking facilities will be provided accordingly. This measure aims to strengthen links with schools that develop Green Travel Plans which incorporate cycling as a means of transport.



#### 4.5 Information Repository for Cyclists

Easily accessible information on training, maintenance and infrastructure, will be made accessible to the general public.



#### 4.6 National Cycling Route Network Display

Information on NCRN routes will be displayed with the aim of increasing the safety of cyclists and promoting the use of the NCRN.

# 4. Information and Awareness

## – Measures 7 & 8

### Continuous

#### 4.7 Cycling Awareness Raising Campaign

- A cycling awareness raising campaign about cyclists' behaviour will be promoted. This will include the practice of riding in groups, filtering through traffic, clearing other vehicles, and adhering to speed limits. The campaign will target both cyclists and motorists to highlight the differentiated responsibilities.

#### 4.8 Continuous Promotional Cycling Campaigns

- Area-wide campaigns will be conducted to encourage cycling as a mode of transport in a more rigorous and structured manner to ensure effectiveness by focusing on specific target areas in succession.
- Educational campaigns will be established including the promotion of new cycle routes and their features.
- Dedicated national and local events will be organised as appropriate.
- Measures indicated in the National Air Quality Plan and other environmental related action plans will be implemented.

# 4. Information and Awareness – Measure 9

## Continuous



### 4.9 Promotion of awareness of the change in legislation

- The awareness of codes and legislation related to road use will be promoted, to ensure compliance by all road users. The advisory rules in the Highway Code will be clarified using language such as ‘should/should not’ or ‘do/do not’.
- Furthermore, the Highway Code will define the different types of vehicles in order to minimise confusion.



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