

CYCLING IN QUÉBEC

— IN 2015 —



Vélo Québec

Cycling in Québec in 2015

The government adopted its first bicycle policy in 1995, setting the stage for building a bicycle-friendly culture in the province. It subsequently implemented a series of measures designed to promote cycling as a recreational pursuit and, gradually, as a means of transportation. In so doing, it contributed to sustainable development in Québec.

For the Ministère des Transports, de la Mobilité durable et de l'Électrification des transports and its partners, the publication of *Cycling in Québec in 2015* is an invaluable opportunity to take stock of the results of the initiatives put forward thus far.

In the next five years, the government plans to invest \$27.5 million to improve mobility and safety for cyclists and to ensure the maintenance and sustainability of the Route verte, in collaboration with municipal stakeholders. This bodes well for the future of cycling.

Cycling in Québec in 2015 confirms that the past two decades' worth of efforts to encourage cycling have paid off and motivates us to stay on the same track.

JACQUES DAOUST

Minister of Transport, Sustainable Mobility
and Transport Electrification



Every five years since 1995, Vélo Québec has prepared a detailed report on cycling in Québec. Among the topics covered and analyzed in detail are cyclists' habits, the economic, health and ecological benefits of cycling, and the prevalence and use of bicycle-friendly facilities. Based on this vast undertaking, we can identify trends, correlations and observations – and use this to prepare a comprehensive profile of what cycling is, does and means to Quebecers to enable well-informed decision-making on cycling in the future.

Methodology

The data used for this fifth edition of the study came from a variety of sources:

- A province-wide survey on cycling in Québec conducted by the Léger polling firm in the fall of 2015 and analyzed by André Poirier, a professor in the Département de techniques de recherche sociale at Collège de Rosemont.
- Analyses of origin-destination study data for several Québec cities performed by the Chaire de recherche Mobilité at Polytechnique Montréal.
- A study of the economic benefits of cycling by the Transat Chair in Tourism at the Université du Québec à Montréal.

For further information on the methodology used and for detailed results: velo.qc.ca/cycling2015

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Ville de Laval

Ville de Longueuil

Ville de Montréal

Ville de Québec

Ville de Sherbrooke

Ville de Terrebonne

Ville de Trois-Rivières

Cycling: A Way of Life

Québec's two-wheeled enthusiasts incorporate cycling into every aspect of their daily life.

An ever-growing number of cyclists

Statistics clearly show that there are more cyclists in Québec in 2015 than there were 20 years ago. In urban, rural and off-road settings, there are now 4.2 million cyclists pedalling around the province – 600,000 more than in 1995.

This increase of over half a million people is even more impressive when you consider that our population has aged considerably in the past two decades. Between 1995 and 2015, the median age has gone up six years, from 36 to 42. In other words, cycling has been spared the drop in activity that usually occurs in an aging population.

Another surprising fact: more than half of the Québec population are cyclists. This compares very favourably to the United States and Australia, where the proportion is barely a third. So, relatively speaking, there are 1.5 times more cyclists here than in these two similarly developed countries which have a climate generally more conducive to cycling. Unfortunately, we do not have enough data about practices in other Canadian provinces to draw a nation-wide comparison.

CYCLISTS PER CAPITA



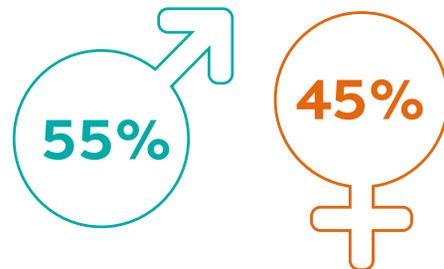
Growing popularity among adults 35+

The fact that there are 600,000 more Quebecers in the saddle now than in 1995 is in large part due to the 35-and-up population segment. The proportion of cyclists in this age group rose from 42% to 50% in the past two decades. However, the most impressive growth was observed in the 65-to-74 age bracket, where the proportion of cyclists went from 12% in 1995 to 29% in 2015.

Women vs. men

Overall, the cycling population in Québec is made up of 55% men and 45% women. It is interesting to note that communities with more extensive cycling facilities tend to have a higher share of female cyclists. This is the case in Denmark and in the Netherlands, where women actually use bicycles more than men.

GENDER SPLIT



4.2 MILLION
cyclists in Québec

Numerous...

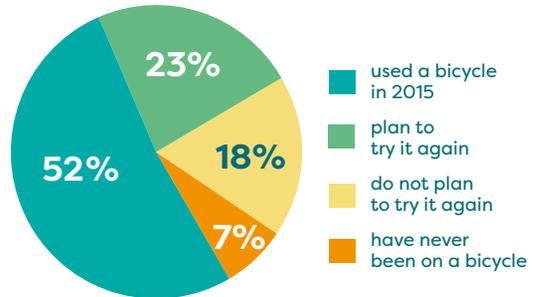
The freedom of hopping on a bicycle, setting out and feeling the wind in your hair: 6.8 million Quebecers – four out of five – say they have experienced this at least once in their lives.

In 2015, 4.2 million Quebecers indulged in this pleasure. The remaining 2.6 million reported that their last cycling outing dated back further than a year, although 1.4 million adults indicated that they were considering trying it again in the near future. Their wish should be within their grasp as there are 1.8 million more bicycles in Québec than there are adult cyclists.

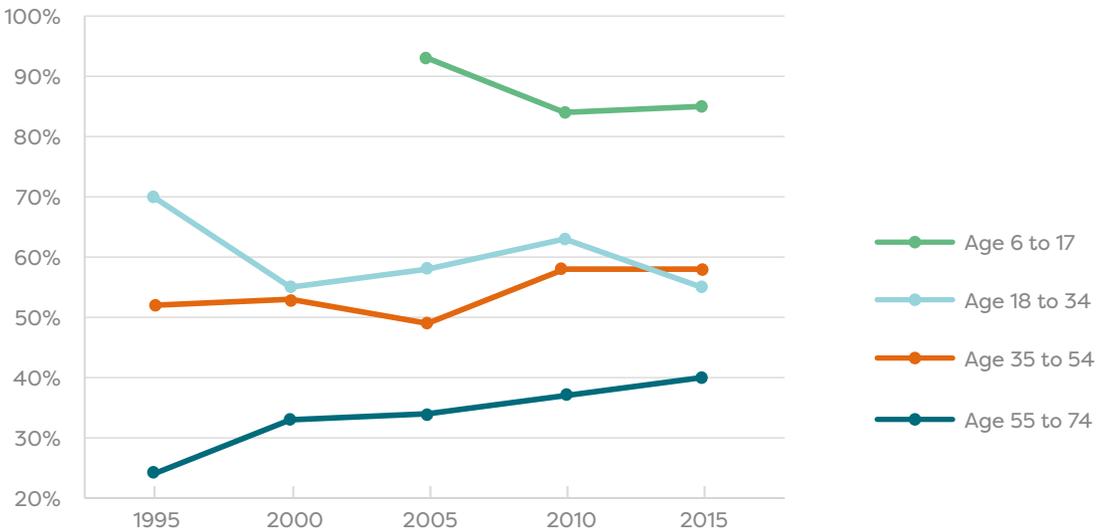
...and dedicated

Not only are their numbers strong, but so is their dedication to cycling. Between May and September 2015, cyclists spent 3.3 hours on their bicycle and travelled 43 kilometres on average per week. What's more, two out of three cyclists – or 2.7 million people – indicated that they cycled at least once a week.

ADULTS AND CYCLING



PERCENTAGE OF CYCLISTS BY AGE



From Earliest Childhood

Good news: the steep decline in cycling among the young observed from 2005 to 2010 has come to a halt.

As many young cyclists as in 2010

A million young Quebecers went cycling in 2015 – that's eight children out of ten in the 3–5 age bracket, nine children out of ten in the 6–13 age bracket, and three out of four teens in the 14–17 age bracket. These numbers are identical to the 2010 statistics and confirm that the downward trend seen between 2005 and 2010 has levelled out.

Same frequency of use as in 2005

Between May and September, young cyclists in Québec spent an average of 4 hours a week cycling, and more than 69% of them made it a regular weekly activity. This is a return to the percentage observed in 2005, after a dip down to 59% in 2010.

REGULAR BICYCLE USE (ONCE A WEEK OR MORE), AGE 6 TO 17



Fun and functional!

Whether it's for travelling to school, getting to a friend's house or going to the park, two out of three young cyclists use their bicycle as a mode of transportation.

CYCLING FOR TRANSPORTATION



Programs such as Vélo Québec's *On the Move in the Community*, which promote cycling and the development of bicycle-friendly environments, are designed to cater to the needs of young cyclists. Since its creation in 2005, *On the Move in the Community* has reached out to over 630,000 students and their parents in 900 elementary schools and 300 high schools across the province. The program is one of the most comprehensive in North America and encourages active transportation through a variety of measures aimed at making it easier for children and their parents to commute from home to school and work. An expanded bikeway network and traffic-calming measures introduced at the municipal level are among the other initiatives that fall under the purview of *On the Move in the Community*.



Two Wheels, 365 Days a Year

From heat waves to cold snaps, more and more Quebecers are cycling year-round.

Fall

In the fall, the changing leaves do not mark the end of bike season – far from it. There are a million cyclists pedalling away well into October. In November, around 300,000 cyclists are still out and about.

The mode share of cycling on the Island of Montréal is 4% between the peak months of May and September, and gradually drops to about 3% in October and then 2% in November.

Winter

More than 180,000 Québec adults use their bicycle at least once between December and March. In the dead of winter, nearly 100,000 cyclists brave the freezing cold temperatures in January and February despite the limited number of snow- and ice-cleared bicycle paths. In winter 2015, the most brutal on record in 65 years, this dedication was particularly impressive.

The recent arrival of the wide-tired fatbike on the market could have an impact. No matter what the snow conditions – fresh packed or hardened and icy – fatbikes can handle trails and less-maintained streets.

Spring

In March, the number of cyclists gradually starts to grow again before exploding in April. By the time spring has sprung, more than 500,000 Quebecers are back in their saddles, cruising on streets and paths throughout the province.

Summer

Summer is prime cycling season for all Quebecers.

A longer season...

Those who use the bicycle as a mode of transportation tend to embrace the cooler weather more readily. Their bicycles come out of storage a little earlier in the season and get put away a little later. Some 28% of these utility cyclists are pedalling in April and 47% are still rolling in October. Among those who cycle purely for leisure, these figures are 10% and 29%, respectively. A similar trend can be observed in BIXI ridership data, which show 10,000 trips a day in both April and October, more than half the daily ridership registered from May to September.

ADULT CYCLISTS BY SEASON



October–November
1,100,000



December–March
180,000



April
500,000



May–September
3,200,000

A Well-Developed, Well-Used Cycling Network

A wide array of bicycle-friendly facilities are available to Québec cyclists.

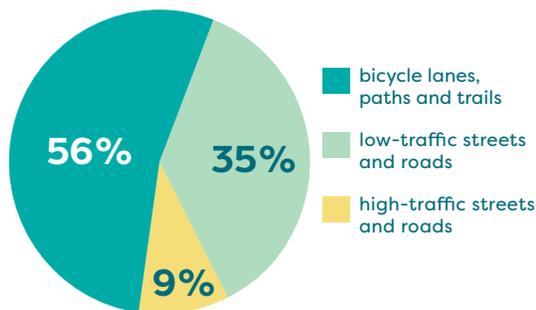
A clear preference

In Québec, every second bicycle trip is taken on a dedicated bicycle facility, while every third trip is taken on a low-traffic street or road. If we add to that trips on mountain bike trails, we find that nine trips out of ten are made in bicycle-friendly environments.

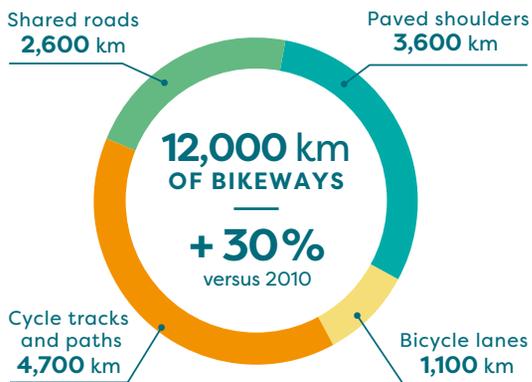
An abundance of bikeways

There are currently 12,000 kilometres of bikeways in Québec – 30% more than in 2010. In 14 of Québec’s 16 administrative regions, there are at least 500 kilometres of bikeways for cyclists to enjoy.

TRIPS BY TYPE OF BIKEWAY



QUÉBEC CYCLING NETWORK



A Firm Political Commitment

Provincial policies are making cycling and cyclist safety a priority.

Sustainable mobility

Most Quebecers live in a community that has included cycling in its transportation policies. As of 2015, two out of three people in the province live in a municipality that has policies that support the development of cycling facilities and traffic-calming measures that make sharing the road safer and more comfortable. It is therefore unsurprising that these types of initiatives are increasingly common across Québec.

While most of the province's bigger cities have already adopted bicycle-friendly policies of this nature, several smaller communities, such as Baie-Comeau and Beloeil, have also been proactive.

Most of these policies are fairly recent developments. Going forward, they will obviously have to be enforced if they are to yield tangible results.

Public awareness

Between 2010 and 2015, more than one Quebecer out of three lived in an area targeted by a speed reduction or shared roadway awareness campaign. That translates to 3 million people in over 25 municipalities across the province, including Rivière-du-Loup, Val-d'Or, Mont-Tremblant, Saint-Lambert and Victoriaville, to name but a few.

This commitment at the local level is consistent with an international movement of communities seeking to create more human-scaled environments.

Although Québec is ahead of the curve in this regard with respect to the rest of Canada and the US, there is still a lot of ground to cover to catch up to Europe.



From Point A to Point B...

Bicycle commuting is bigger than ever in Québec.

A popular means of transportation

For 1.9 million Quebecers, the bicycle is a frequent means of transportation to get to work, school or another destination.

This includes 660,000 children, or two-thirds of cyclists in the 3–17 age range.



Big with adults

The number of utility cyclists more than doubled between 2000 and 2015, from 500,000 to 1.2 million. Of this, 780,000 cyclists travel from point A to point B weekly or more often.

UTILITY CYCLISTS



A primarily urban phenomenon

The trend is even stronger in city environments. On a province-wide basis, 40% of cyclists use their bicycle as a means of transportation. However, in Montréal, Québec City, Sherbrooke and Longueuil, this proportion is 55%. The trend toward more utility cycling is likely to continue as bicycle facilities and traffic-calming measures are further expanded across the province.



...to Point C

The potential for utility cycling is strong across the province.

Commuting to work

In Québec, one person in three works within five kilometres of their home. On a bicycle, this distance can be covered in less than 25 minutes, and there is no risk of delay due to traffic congestion. Bicycle commuting is a simple, practical solution that has already been embraced by thousands of people living in central city neighbourhoods.

The potential benefits don't stop there. In Sherbrooke, Trois-Rivières and Saguenay, 45% of workers live within a 5-kilometre radius of their workplace. In Saint-Georges, Joliette, Rivière-du-Loup, Saint-Hyacinthe, Dolbeau-Mistassini and Victoriaville, this is the case for more than 60% of workers.

Other practical uses

One motor vehicle trip in five in Montréal, Québec City, Laval, Gatineau, Longueuil, Sherbrooke and Terrebonne could easily be made by bicycle. This figure is limited to short, straightforward trips, with no loads or passengers to carry. In actual fact, however, the potential is even greater, since bicycles can be used to run many kinds of errands and to get children to school.

Similarly, in Montréal's suburbs, close to one trip out of three to a commuter train station could be made by bicycle instead of by car. The same can be said about getting to and from one of the rapid bus lines in Gatineau or Québec City.



Cycling in Québec in 2015

4.2 MILLION

cyclists in Québec

3.2 MILLION

adults

1 MILLION

youth

55%

MALE



45%

FEMALE



adults

each week

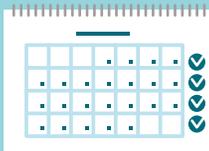
youth

3.3 h



43 km

4 h



2.7 MILLION

Quebecers cycle every week

51%

of trips are made on bikeways

CYCLING NETWORK

+30% versus 2010

12,000 km

of bikeways



5,000 km

Route verte



1.9 MILLION

Quebecers cycle as a means
of transportation



IMPACT OF CYCLING ON QUÉBEC SOCIETY

ANNUAL SPENDING

\$1.2 BILLION



\$150 MILLION/YEAR

for the Québec
government

DOMESTIC TOURISM

1.6 MILLION OVERNIGHT STAYS



design by FFunction

VALUE AS A PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

\$2.6 BILLION*

*based on WHO/HEAT figures



Montréal: Ahead of the Curve

Montréal tops the list of bikeable North American cities.

An extensive cycling network

Montréal's 2008 Transportation Plan pledged to double the length of the city's cycling network. Since 2010, 200 kilometres have been added, increasing the network's length to 748 kilometres.

In 2015, the City of Montréal announced its intention to expand the network even further, to a total of 1,280 kilometres.

MONTRÉAL'S CYCLING NETWORK



Convenient and comfortable

Currently, there are 296 kilometres of streets in Montréal with dedicated cycling facilities, i.e., bicycle lanes or cycle tracks, also known as protected bike lanes. That's nearly twice more than Toronto. Of this total, 82 kilometres are cycle tracks, separated from motor vehicles by curbs or delineator posts. Vancouver has only a third and Toronto has but a quarter this length of cycle tracks. It is worth noting, however, that cities across Canada have accelerated development of separated cycling facilities and are swiftly closing the gap.

Bike lanes... and so much more

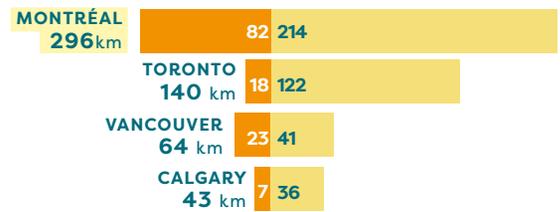
The City of Montréal has not procrastinated when it comes to traffic-calming measures. Between 2010 and 2015, it set up speed humps, curb extensions and chicanes on over 130 kilometres of streets. The result: slower vehicle speeds, increased comfort and safety for pedestrians and cyclists, and environments that are decidedly more conducive to walking and cycling.

CYCLING NETWORKS IN LEADING CANADIAN CITIES

Total length



Bicycle lanes and separated cycle tracks



Separated cycle tracks (in km)

Bicycle lanes (in km)

Mode share in Montréal

On the Island of Montréal, 2.5% of all trips are carried out on a bicycle. That's one out of every 40 trips to work, school and all other destinations.

Between 2008 and 2013, the mode share of cycling has risen by half among women, from 1.2% to 1.8%, and a third among men, from 2.4% and 3.3%.

On any given day, there are 116,000 bicycle trips made in Montréal. This figure increased 57% between 2008 and 2013.

Cycling to work

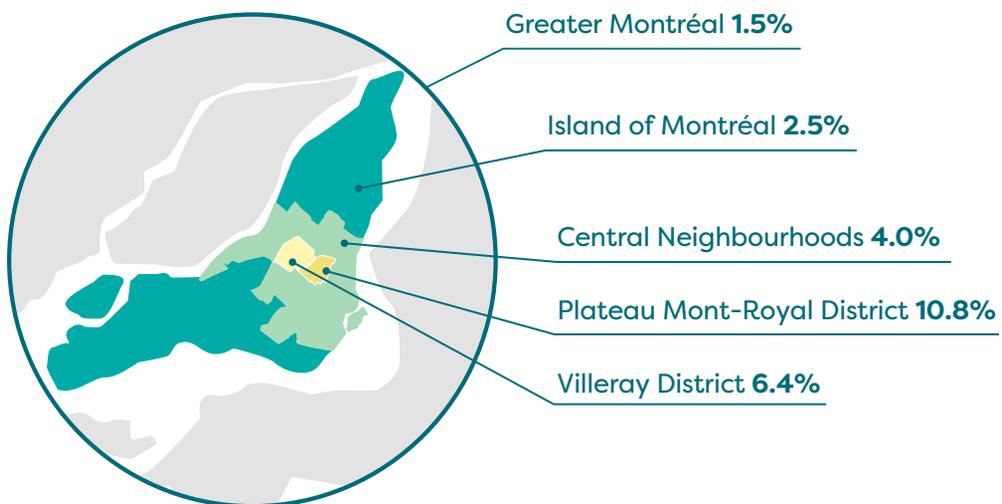
In Montréal, the mode share of cycling was 2.9% in 2011 and has likely increased since then. It surpasses that of all similarly sized American cities. In absolute numbers, Montréal's 24,000 bicycle commuters are surpassed only by the 36,000 of New York City, which has a four-times-larger population.

Central neighbourhoods

In Montréal's central neighbourhoods, which over 1 million residents call home, 4% of trips are made on two wheels. In a comparable area in Vancouver, including Burnaby and New Westminster, with a combined population of more than 900,000, the mode share of cycling is 3.3%.

In Montréal's Villeray and Plateau-Mont-Royal districts, which have a combined population of 210,000, the bicycle mode share for all trips is 6.4% and 10.8%, respectively. These results are in the same range as the bicycle mode share of cities such as Helsinki, Seville, Vienna and Stockholm (6%-11%), and are approaching those of the cycling powerhouses of Berlin and Munich (13%-14%).

BICYCLE MODE SHARE IN 2013



The Joy of Cycling

Quebecers also bike for the pure pleasure of it.

On average, Québec cyclists engage in 2.7 hours of leisure cycling every week. As a form of physical activity, it is second only to walking, according to several recent studies.

If Quebecers love cycling, it's because it can be practiced in so many different ways. You can hit the road by yourself or with a group, meander freely or follow a set path, for only a few minutes

or for several hours or even days on a long voyage. The simple pleasure of riding along bike paths, on country roads or on mountain bike trails is also a wonderful way to get into shape, get a good workout or compete with others.



Happy Trails

Lots of young (and not-so-young) Quebecers have caught the mountain biking bug. Luckily, the province has plenty of trails for them.

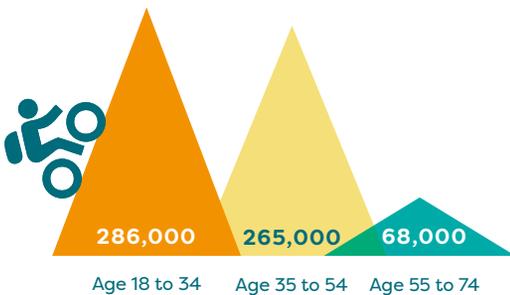
A large number of enthusiasts

In 2015, 620,000 Québec adults included mountain biking among their leisure activities. This figure compares favourably to cross-country skiing, hockey and downhill skiing, in which 622,000, 624,000 and 734,000 enthusiasts respectively participate.

Broad appeal

Mountain biking isn't just for young adults either. Province-wide, there are 265,000 mountain bikers aged 35 to 54, which is not far off the 286,000 in the 18–34 age group. Among cyclists 55 and up, the popularity understandably wanes, although the figure is still quite healthy at 68,000.

MOUNTAIN BIKERS BY AGE



Thousands of kilometres of trails...

With 2,200 kilometres of trails and 86 facilities in 16 regions, Québec ranks third among Canadian provinces in terms of mountain bike friendliness, behind British Columbia and Ontario.

...in rural settings

Most mountain bike trails are located in rural settings, which can be a challenge to access for city-dwellers, who have to travel 40 kilometres or more to partake in this activity. This also explains why mountain bikers tend not to engage in the activity on a weekly basis. Despite these obstacles, some 400,000 off-road hours are racked up every week by fans.

A new breed of bicycle

Since the arrival of the wide-tired fatbike in Québec, mountain biking is no longer limited to the months of May to October. More than 500 kilometres of trails in 46 facilities across 10 regions throughout the province now stay open in the winter. As the number of trails is growing as quickly as the number of bike manufacturers, winter mountain biking promises to become more and more popular in the years ahead. No matter what the snow conditions – fresh packed or hard and crusty – fatbikes are equipped to power through the most unpredictable of winter weather.

The One and Only Route verte

La Route verte is Québec's crown jewel, a destination for cyclists from near and far.

5,000 kilometres of happiness

The Route verte is the only fully signposted system of bikeways in North America with, as of 2015, 5,000 kilometres and seven routes crisscrossing the province.

Two out of every five of its kilometres, 1,900 kilometres in all, are off-road paths. This includes linear parks like Le P'tit Train du Nord and Parc linéaire des Bois-Francs, extensive sections of cycling routes such as the Véloroute des Bleuets, not to mention trails meandering through provincial parks, including the Oka, Plaisance, and Yamaska parks.

The remaining 3,100 kilometres are made up of paved shoulders alongside panoramic highways or quiet rural roads running through picturesque towns and villages. These include the Chemin du Roy, which bounds the mighty St. Lawrence, and the Véloroute des Baleines, which follows the north shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, home to many species of whales and sea mammals. The Gaspé Peninsula's scenic Route 132 also falls into this category.

Unique in North America

The Route verte is exceptional for many reasons: its impressive length, its well-marked trails, its *Bienvenue cyclistes!* network of cyclist-friendly accommodations and its online maps. There's simply nothing else like it in North America. Ontario's Waterfront Trail stretches a mere 1,600 kilometres by comparison.

But the Route verte also stacks up well against several of its European counterparts, including the national networks in Switzerland (3,000 km), Denmark (3,500 km) and the Netherlands (5,000 km). And its enviable reputation puts it on virtually equal footing with the world-renowned German and UK cycling networks.

A compelling tourist attraction

Cyclists come from far and wide to bask in the beauty of the Route verte. In fact, seven out of ten tourists who make cycling part of their Québec vacation spend at least some of their time on the Route verte¹. It plays a major part in the choice of cycling destination, especially for tourists from outside the province.

The Route verte experience rarely disappoints. Tourists who use it tend to spend more time in the province (36% of stays lasting five nights or longer) than those who do not (only 16% of stays lasting five nights or longer).



¹ According to the *Tourisme à vélo au Québec – Portrait de la clientèle* study (Transat Chair in Tourism, 2015)

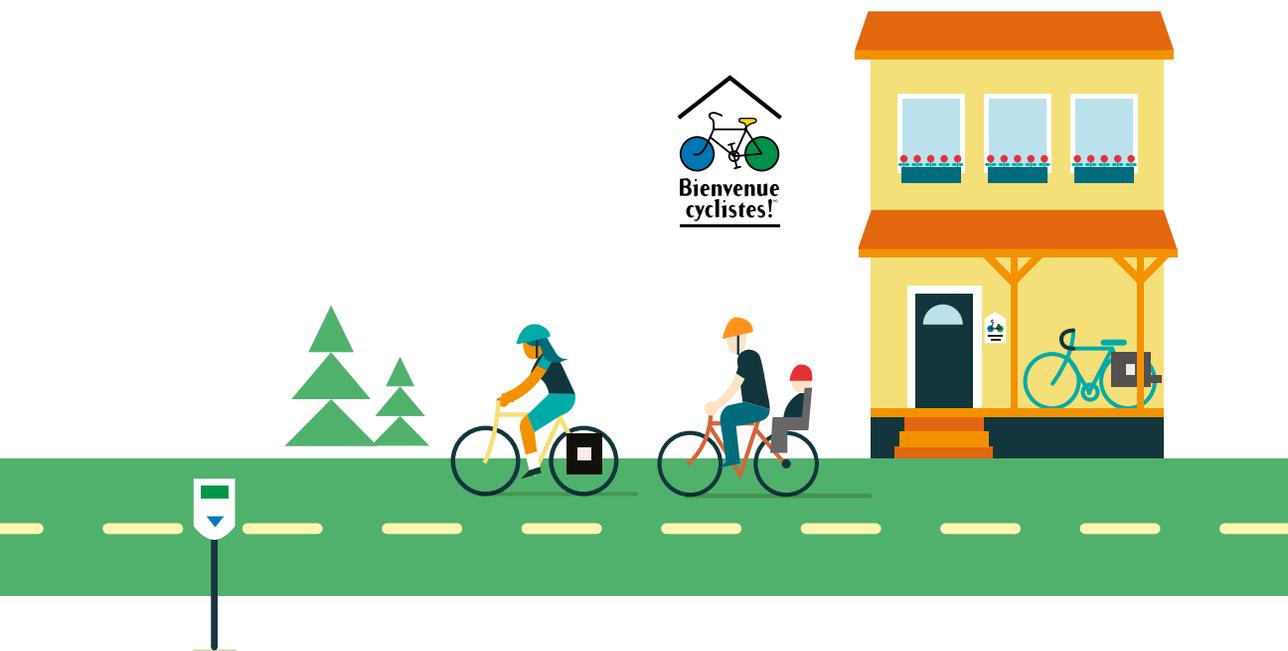
Well-known and well-travelled

You don't have to be a cyclist to know what the Route verte is: 58% of Quebecers are aware of its existence, which is greater than the percentage of cyclists in the province. And when reminded that it is the 5,000-kilometre province-wide network of bikeways, brand recognition climbs even higher to 68%, or two out of three Quebecers.

Although they may know what the Route verte is, many cyclists are not necessarily aware of how close by it really is. A million Quebecers report that they rode on the Route verte in 2015. Yet its various branches extend to 39 of the province's 50 most populated communities, where it serves as the backbone for local cycling networks. There is therefore reason to believe that many cyclists are using sections of the Route verte, for practical or recreational purposes, without even realizing it.

Cyclist-friendly accommodations

There are 500 establishments certified as *Bienvenue cyclistes!* at various locations along the Route verte and catering to touring cyclists needs. They offer basic bicycle repair kits as well as maps and information on local cycling facilities. These include 400 cyclist-friendly bed-and-breakfasts and hotels that provide guests with safe bicycle parking. As for the 100 *Bienvenue cyclistes!*-certified campgrounds, they provide guaranteed accommodations to cyclists without the need for advance booking and a shelter in case of bad weather.



A Vital Link in the Québec Economy

Cycling-related spending puts money back into the province.

Economic benefits

Together, cycling and bicycle-related tourism generate \$1.2 billion in spending every year in Québec. This not only creates the equivalent of 10,000 jobs but also generates \$150 million in tax revenues for the provincial government and \$65 million for its federal counterpart.

Tourists and excursionists

In 2015, 765,000 Quebecers took part in 5.8 million bicycle excursions 40 kilometres or more away from home, which equates to an average of 7.5 excursions per cyclist.

During the same year, 228,000 Québec tourists made 680,000 overnight stays during which the primary activity was cycling. This adds up to 1.6 million guest nights.

Tourism benefits

It is important to note that cycling tourists in Québec spend 6% more than the average leisure traveller (all sectors combined). These visitors, who hail from other Canadian provinces, the US and overseas, spend an average of \$242 per family per day in Québec.

Total annual tourism spending by cyclists in Québec amounts to nearly \$700 million and, even more importantly, creates the equivalent of 6,800 jobs in the province.

The Québec and federal governments receive \$100 million and \$38 million respectively in tax revenues from this economic activity.



\$1.2 billion/year
cycling-related spending
in Québec

Market
\$500 million

Tourism
\$700 million



\$150 million/year
provincial
government revenues

Market
\$50 million

Tourism
\$100 million

A flourishing industry

There are a number of Québec companies that specialize in the manufacture and distribution of bicycles, accessories and gear for cyclists.

Among the worthy representatives of this dynamic industry are the Montréal-based multinational Dorel, whose brands include Cannondale, Schwinn and Sugoi, and bike pannier designer and builder Arkel, in Sherbrooke. Like Devinci (Saguenay), Procycle (Beauce) and Louis Garneau (Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures), these Québec companies market their products on both sides of the Atlantic, and beyond.

A thriving market

In 2015, more than 600,000 bicycles were purchased in Québec. On a per capita basis, that means that Quebecers buy 1.5 times more bicycles than their American neighbours.

Factoring in the maintenance expenses and cost of clothing and accessories along with the initial cost of the bicycle, Quebecers spent a total of nearly \$500 million on cycling-related purchases in 2015.



10,000 jobs



Safety First!

Cycling in Québec has never been as safe as it is right now.

Fewer injuries and fatalities

The number of cyclists who are seriously injured on Québec roads has decreased by a factor of three over the past 20 years. Between 1991 and 1995, 315 serious injuries occurred annually. In 2010–2014, this was down to 101, a drop of 68%.

A similar trend can be seen in the number of fatalities, down from 29 in 1991–1995 to 17 in 2010–2014.

In 2015, less than one cyclist in 35,000 was seriously injured or killed in Québec. That translates to one serious injury or death per 20 million kilometres on a province-wide basis.

This increase in cyclist safety is not attributable to lower traffic volumes. In fact, the lower accident rate has been accompanied by an increase in both the number of cyclists and motorists on the road. The development of Québec's cycling network, the total length of which has grown fivefold, is undoubtedly a major contributing factor.

CYCLIST SAFETY (1995–2015)



A safe physical activity

Statistics show that cycling is a safe activity: injuries severe enough to require medical attention affect less than 13 out of 1,000 cyclists per year.¹

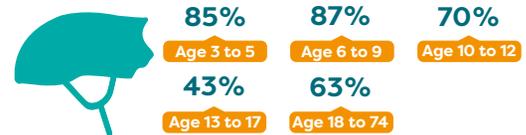
MEDICAL CONSULTATIONS PER 1,000 USERS



Helmet use

Helmets are worn by the majority of cyclists in Québec. Some wear them unfailingly and some less frequently.

DECLARED HELMET USE IN QUÉBEC



TRAFFIC FATALITIES AND SERIOUS INJURIES IN 2014 (SAAQ, 2015)



¹ Figures taken from the *Étude des blessures subies au cours de la pratique d'activités récréatives et sportives au Québec en 2009-2010* (Institut national de santé publique du Québec, 2012), the methodology of which is comparable to this study.

A Host of Benefits

Any way you slice it, cycling is beneficial to Quebecers: it saves lives, it makes us all healthier and it's good for the environment.

Value of physical activity

Québec cyclists spend an average of 3.3 hours a week behind their handlebars. That represents a total of 10 million hours a week of physical activity.

What do the benefits generated by this activity mean in dollars and cents? The Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT) has been developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) to help make an economic assessment of the health benefits of cycling by estimating the value of reduced mortality that results from specified amounts of cycling and multiplies this by the statistical value of a life.

Using this method, it has been determined that the current level of cycling in Québec prevents 390 deaths a year, which translates to an annual economic value of \$2.6 billion. It should be noted that this benefit is independent of any resulting reductions in healthcare spending.

A greener way to go

If the 43 kilometres that cyclists ride per week between May and September were to be travelled by car instead, an additional 900,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas would be released into the environment.

Bicycles also improve overall quality of life in our cities by helping to reduce air and noise pollution.



Since its first edition in 1995, *Cycling in Québec* has sought to shed light on the links between cycling, bicycle-friendly environments and the positive outcomes of bicycle use. Whether used for transportation, recreation or tourism, cycling is beneficial to individuals and to society as a whole.



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