



## **Wrap up speech Bernhard Ensink, ECF Secretary General,**

### **Velo-city 2017 Arnhem-Nijmegen, 16 June 2017**

What you told us, what you shared with us at this Velo-city conference was amazing – amazing regarding quality and quantity – The legacy of your contributions to this conference in the year of 200 years of the bicycle will help to move on to get more people cycling, more often. Thank you all so much for the knowledge and inspiration you shared with us and with each other.

What did we learn at Velo-city 2017? At least this:

#### DNA & Infrastructure

1. We learnt about 'Going Dutch': Going Dutch means you have a cycling King and millions of queens and kings on the road: people that are on their bicycles at all ages, even with their mom before they are born.

We learnt about the history of cycling and the revival of cycling in the Netherlands since the 1970ies. The voice of the people, the campaigns on the street in the times when the Dutch Fietsersbond took off did matter.

Campaigns and advocacy changed the mindset of Dutch local and national decision makers. Cycling in the Netherland was 40 years ago not what it is now. It is the result of political choices and hard work of people. It is human made.

Cycling is NOT in the DNA of the Dutch people – but it is in the DNA of the Dutch society. Safe and convenient infrastructure for cycling is key for a cycling country as the Netherlands are. Create space and Infrastructure for cycling – and you get cycling into the DNA of your society. And into the DNA of the

Railway Sector. We learnt about great bicycle parking at Dutch railway stations and the successful public transport bicycles system of the Dutch railways.

### Mobility systems & Diversity

2. We learnt that Transportation systems are not gender neutral. We need the diversity of voices to get inclusive mobility systems.

More women to design our cities and public space.

We need the involvement of the whole society to change our mobility systems. Infrastructure matters, but we learnt also that infrastructure does not solve everything.

We need to stop working in silos.

### Mass transport & Humanity

3. We learnt that cyclists in Dutch cycling cities are swarming as birds through the public space and the infrastructure the city gives them - creating an amazing way self-organized flow of mass transport by bike.

We learnt that traffic and mobility experts have to focus on people, on the human needs and human behavior when they plan and design infrastructure for cycling. It seems to be that human contact between the people is a very important factor in cycling as mass transportation. And cycling is in the Netherlands mass transportation – fortunately not only in the Netherlands!

And we learnt that humans are made to move by their own human power – and the bicycle helps many people to do that - even people that can't walk.

### Economy & Happiness

4. We learnt that a Gross National Happiness index would be much better for the acknowledgement of the benefits of cycling than our current GDP, the Gross Domestic Product index. We have to frame the global discussion, we have to table better what really matters: a sustainable world in all respects.

As decision makers talk economics we need to talk economics as well. We need to talk Bikenomics, as we need to convince decision makers based on data and figures. The economic impact of the cycling sector is huge. Let's be bold on that! We have already data and evidence – but we need still better data as cycling is often not in the statistics.

### Technology & Language

5. We learnt about the language we use. The current focus on technology makes us using 'machine language'. No doubts about the need of good new technologies. No doubt about that we need to engage in the debate on new technologies, and digitalization.

Cycling is part of smart mobility. And smarter cycling is still mass transport where human contact is key. The current focus in the mobility arena on connected and autonomous vehicles creates a machine language. - We need to use the right language, the right frames, the right paradigms. Language that puts people first – and vehicles second. We need to safe the human aspects in the arenas of smart mobility and new technologies.

Let's get in any case rid of the term non-motorized transport, a term that frames cycling and walking through the windscreen of the car. Let's talk about active mobility!

### Exchange & Strategies

6. We learnt that it is possible to change neighborhoods and cities to better places for people. We heard about little Holland in the United Kingdom. We can learn from each other how to import solutions from other countries and how to adapt them to the environment of the own country and city.

International exchange of best practice and collaboration helps to create cycling friendly societies.

We learnt about countries where the bicycle is in fact the vehicle only for the poor and the diehards who don't care about safety. Countries, where huge investments are mainly done for car and public transport infrastructure, used by the rich. We heard the call for reforming governance systems where this is the case.

But we heard also the call for a level playing field for cycling in the policies of the European Union and the European countries.

We need good governance for cycling – on all levels: local, regional, national. We need to change national laws and budgets. The national government should support local cyclin policies and change national rules where they are barriers for good cycling policies.

We can use for this the frames of the global agreements on Sustainable development goals, the Paris climate agreement, the New Urban Agenda, adopted by the UN. They are signed by all countries – from the South and from the North!

We need strategies for cycling on all levels: local, regional, national – and on international level. Strategies that reflect cycling in all important policy fields.

Therefore we are happy that EU Commissioner Bulc takes our recommendations for an EU Cycling Strategy back to Brussels. She promised this morning to read our EU Cycling Strategy document and to keep listening to us. She announced for 2018 the year of multimodality and regulatory framework. Cycling can be a strong component of that. And I would like to support that the Commissioner invited all of us to keep engaged and not to forget to lobby our national ministers.

Let's all together use the heritage of Velo-city 2017 Arnhem-Nijmegen to let it happen: more people cycling, more often – more than ever in history!