

Evonik is the driving force behind the signing of the 'Polder and Noorderkempen cycling policy charter'

13 September 2022

- Based on a shared desire to organise work and mobility in a sustainable and safe manner.
- From the need to make the large companies in the northern and eastern part of the port area accessible by bicycle in a safe, sustainable and comfortable way.
- To ensure that cycling initiatives and cycling infrastructure projects of the Port of Antwerp–Bruges, the local authorities, the province of Antwerp and the higher authorities meet the needs of the companies in and around the port area as much as possible.
- In order to tap into the large potential for cycling in commuter traffic in and around the port, to continue to encourage it and to significantly increase the proportion of cycling in the modal split in the short term, and thus to keep Flanders' most important economic hub accessible and safe.

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Antwerp, 13 September 2022. Evonik, the specialty chemicals company in the port of Antwerp, launched the idea at the end of 2021 from the industry together with BASF, the Berendrecht–Zandvliet–Lillo district, the local authorities of the Woensdrecht, Essen, Kalmthout, Wuustwezel and Stabroek municipalities, to join forces with the Province and the City of Antwerp, Port of Antwerp–Bruges and employers' organisation Voka – Chamber of Commerce Antwerp–Waasland – to increase sustainable commuting in the region, with a focus on cycling.

As part of the intended modal shift for the wider Antwerp Transport Region, the various authorities and companies are increasingly pushing the bicycle as an alternative for commuting.

In particular, the arrival of the electric bike, the speed pedelec, new accents in the mobility policy of companies and recently built cycling infrastructure have accelerated these developments. The bicycle deserves

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a prominent place on the public road, but there are still many points of work to be done to anchor the modal shift in the northern and eastern port region of the province of Antwerp.

The companies, located in the port area, note that the port area is still difficult to reach by bicycle. Motorways, canals, port installations and railway lines mean that cyclists often have to make long detours on inappropriate traffic infrastructure. Extra efforts are needed to remove these barriers.

"With this charter, we are making a long-term commitment TOGETHER to improve cycling and traffic safety in the north and east of Antwerp for commuting and daily journeys. A shared responsibility to organise work and mobility sustainably and safely. We aim for '0' accidents... because every accident is one too many! So it's time to take concrete action in the field, says Ivan Pelgrims, Managing Director of Evonik Antwerp NV.

What are we doing?

The aim of this charter is to bring the industrial community of entrepreneurs and the authorities closer together in order to tackle cycling and road safety comprehensively, both for employees in the port and for the inhabitants around the port area. To this end, the initiators want to focus, beyond the municipal boundaries, on the 5 pillars of road safety.

For the pillar 'policy and organisation', signing this charter is a first concrete action. This charter is a starting point to find out which contributions the partners can make together to develop concrete actions for the other pillars: 'education and communication', 'infrastructure', 'traffic safety' and 'road safety', 'enforcement' and 'monitoring and evaluation'. After all, we can achieve more through cooperation and coordination.

The signatories of this charter commit themselves to pursuing an integrated approach to mobility in the port region in the interests of companies, local authorities, employees and local residents. They are convinced that well-considered investment in cycling policy contributes to better accessibility and thus to the economic strength of the region, to increased road safety, and gives a positive impulse to the well-being,

health and safety of employees. By contributing to the modal shift, investments in cycling policies also help achieve the climate objectives.

Press invitation for the signing of the 'Polder and Noorderkempen cycling policy charter'

On Wednesday 14 September at 1:45 pm we would like to invite you to the presentation and official signing of the 'Polder and Noorderkempen cycling policy' charter at the premises of Voka – Chamber of Commerce Antwerp–Waasland, Markgravestraat 12, 2000 Antwerp.

The signing will take place in the presence of Flemish Minister for Mobility and Public Works Lydia Peeters, representatives of Antwerp port and industry and the local authorities involved.

There will be an official photo opportunity from 2:30 pm. Afterwards, there will be an opportunity for interviews.

The charter came about at the insistence of the industrial business world and the local authorities of Berendrecht–Zandvliet–Lillo, Stabroek, Kalmthout, Essen, Wuustwezel and Woensdrecht, who have been striving for years for a safer and more finely-meshed cycling infrastructure. The signatories of the charter, who include Flemish Minister Lydia Peeters, undertake to work together with the industry and local authorities to comprehensively address cycling and traffic safety in the region for cycling (commuting) traffic between the Polder and Noorderkempen and the port area.

Please confirm your presence in advance to:

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Information about Evonik

Evonik is one of the world leaders in specialty chemicals. The company is active in more than 100 countries around the world and generated sales of €15 billion and an operating profit (adjusted EBITDA) of €2.38 billion in 2021. Evonik goes far beyond chemistry to create innovative, profitable and sustainable solutions for customers. About 33,000 employees work together for a common purpose: We want to improve life, day by day. Evonik Antwerpen is with 11 production plants and more than 1,000 employees one of the largest sites of the group.
<https://www.evonik.com/antwerpen>

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