

## Cycling is the future of inner-city deliveries

**Brussels, 9 May 2019 - More than one out of four deliveries can be made by bicycle in urban areas<sup>1</sup> : bpost, Delhaize, Multipharma and CSD (Centrale de Soins et Services à Domicile de Bruxelles) are well aware of this and are experimenting with containerised bicycle delivery in the Brussels region. The urbike cooperative makes this possible.**

The last mile is the Achilles' heel of freight transport. Heavy traffic and accessibility restrictions in urban areas often make these deliveries difficult and inefficient. For most carriers the last mile is proportionally the most expensive, both economically and in terms of negative externalities for mobility and the environment. Freight transport is responsible for 25% of carbon dioxide emissions and 33% of fine-particle emissions from car traffic in Brussels<sup>2</sup>. What if cycling was the future of city-centre deliveries ?

Thanks to its innovative bicycle distribution model, the Brussels-based **urbike** cooperative will explore this possibility with **bpost**, **CSD**, **Delhaize** and **Multipharma**. Concretely, urbike supplies couriers with trailers<sup>3</sup> that can easily load a pallet or container - unloaded from a truck, boat or train - and then deliver it by bike to the recipients. With a capacity of up to 1.5 m<sup>3</sup> and 200 kg of goods, this solution is a viable alternative to vans and light trucks.



### Kilometre 0

Called BCKlet, this experimental project is financially supported by Innoviris (Test-it) and carried out in collaboration with a consortium of experts: Smart, Febecoop, the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (MOBI) and the Université Saint-Louis. The aim is to prove that bicycle delivery offers a real solution for last mile transportation and can be used for all types of goods. On Thursday, May 9, urbike officially launched the operations of the project with the first bicycle deliveries of the 4 client-partners. From 2020, a total of 115,000 bicycle deliveries are expected annually and about 20 local and sustainable jobs are to be created, even before the activities are scaled up.

<sup>1</sup> Study "CycleLogistics : moving Europe forward (2014-2017)"

<sup>2</sup> Lebeau P et Macharis C, Le transport de marchandises à Bruxelles : quels impacts sur la circulation automobile, Brussels Studies, Numéro 80, 20 octobre 2014

<sup>3</sup> The BicyLift solution from FlexiModal combines a trailer and a pallet truck



#### The 4 client-partners are pioneers in urban logistics:

As owner of one of the country's largest fleets of electric bicycles, **bpost** wants to strengthen its position as the world's greenest postal operator and adapt more effectively to the accessibility constraints of city centres. *«At bpost, we are aware that our activities have a significant impact on the environment. This test therefore allows us to align two major strategic pillars: reducing our carbon footprint by using environmentally friendly vehicles and responding in a sustainable way to the expectations of our customers, who are sending an increasing number of parcels»*, explains Koen Van Gerven, CEO of bpost.

With 700 hot and cold meals delivered daily to patients' homes, the **CSD** is the largest coordination centre in Brussels for home care and services. *«This pilot project represents an exceptional opportunity for CSD to test an alternative, ecological and faster way of delivering meals to our beneficiaries, particularly those in the city centre where urban redevelopment has reshaped mobility»* said Aurélien Doffigny, CEO of the CSD Brussels Group.

With the BCklet project, **Delhaize** becomes the first retailer to supply some of its inner-city stores by bicycle - in this case the Fresh Atelier and Shop & Go *« With this bicycle delivery project, we want to explore before all how we can supply our stores in a sustainable way. The more bicycle shops we can supply, the fewer trucks there will be in traffic and the better for the environment. This project can only have winners »* says Delhaize CEO Xavier Piesvaux

As a key player in the pharmaceutical sector on a national scale, **MultiPharma** is committed to testing a solution for deliveries in urban centres that respects the environment and the specificities of drug transport. *«In addition to the practical solutions that urbike provides to our concerns about mobility and logistical flexibility, the values of the cooperative model supported by Urbike are perfectly in line with those of our cooperative and our vision for the city of tomorrow,»* said Fabienne Bryskère, Managing Director at MultiPharma».





## A cooperative model for bike couriers

With this project, urbike also aims to demonstrate that it is possible to reconcile platform economy and decent working conditions for front-line workers in the urban bicycle delivery sector.

In addition to the operational component, the BCKlet project has a fundamental social objective: to organise bicycle couriers in a cooperative company, in order to guarantee quality jobs for them. In cooperation with the Brussels-based courier companies Dioxyde de Gambettes, Molenbike and Hush Rush, urbike wants to develop a socially responsible business model with a high level of service and high-quality local employment. To achieve this, the project relies on expertise from the academic and cooperative world.

By hosting the urbike cooperative in its ecosystem, Smart provides technological and operational support for the project, and offers its expertise in the development and governance of cooperative platforms. Based on its experience in arbitration with Deliveroo in Belgium, Smart is also working with the University of Saint-Louis to work on improving the social status of platform workers. Febecoop coordinates the implementation of urbike's governance in order to support its economic model and effective participative management.

## Impacts

By 2025, urbike estimates that the large-scale deployment of the BCKlet solution should be able to avoid the emission of 66,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> each year, thanks to the modal shift from vans and light trucks to bicycles. This would represent 2%<sup>4</sup> of the Region's current total emissions! But this will naturally have to be confirmed by the MOBI laboratory at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, which is responsible within the BCKlet consortium for measuring the social (mobility, noise, comfort) and environmental (pollution) externalities avoided by the urbike model.

Cycling is more than ever the future of deliveries in city centres!

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<sup>4</sup> based on emission inventories - year 2017 (official submission April 2019)



## Links

Press kit: <https://urbike.be/dossier-de-presse-090519>

Photos and videos of the solution: <https://urbike.be/photos-presse>

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