CYCLING FACTS FOR DUMMIES *Cycling Policy Professionals*

The path to more robust cycling policy

December 2025

IT ALL STARTS WITH AMBITION

Ambition is the driving force behind setting goals, initiating action and striving for success in life. When it comes to cycling policy, the collaborating authorities, market players, civil society organisations, knowledge institutes and platforms committed to a stronger cycling policy in the Netherlands have set the goal of achieving a 40% increase in the number of kilometres cycled between 2017 and 2040. Increased cycling has a positive impact on:

- Accessible & attractive cities
- Accessibility of rural areas
- Accelerating housing construction
- Health & happiness
- Limiting climate change & achieving a low-nitrogen environment
- An inclusive society

To increase cycling, the **National Cycling Vision** focuses on strengthening cycle networks, improving parking facilities and encouraging cycling. To assess the effectiveness of cycling policy, a data, insight and actionable insights are necessary. What makes this complex is that, in the Netherlands, we have organised a separate data and policy ecosystem. Most cycling policy officers are familiar with the Tour de Force (cycling policy), whilst awareness of the Digital System (DSM) is growing. To enable us to accelerate progress together, this brochure provides insight into the background of cycling data, collaboration between policy and data, and the framework for data-driven cycling policy innovation. After reading this brochure, you will be up to date with the latest developments in the field of data-driven cycling policy innovation and familiar with the many abbreviations.

Contents of this brochure:

- **Cycling data is firmly embedded in the DSM.**
- **An active "Tactische Tafel Fiets" (Domain advisory board cycling data)**
- **Data sources: cycle counts, cycle journeys, network, parking data and ODiN**
- **Results: detailed data chains, guidelines (including counting and parking data) and joint tender for the cycle journey app 'Da's zo gefietst'**

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CYCLING DATA

If someone wishes to work with cycling data in the Netherlands, there are various initiatives, organisations and platforms involved, and the landscape is broadly organised. Cycling data is used by public authorities, research institutions, businesses and interest groups to support mobility policy and stimulate innovation. Newcomers taking their first steps into the wonderful world of cycling data can quickly get lost in the multitude of abbreviations. That is why we are taking you through the organisation of the data ecosystem.

Digital Framework for Mobility Data (in the Netherlands) (DSM)

The DSM is a partnership between public authorities, businesses and data hubs[1] aimed at digitising and exchanging mobility data in the Netherlands. By pooling data from various sources, such as road authorities, public transport operators and navigation services, an integrated system is created that contributes to more efficient, safer and more sustainable mobility. The DSM works to systematically organise and maintain mobility data. The DSM focuses on:

- Coordination and collaboration between public authorities, market parties and knowledge institutions.
- Standards and agreements on how data is shared.
- Access to up-to-date, reliable and usable mobility data, across all modes of transport.

Roads and railways do not stop at the border, so coordination between the various Member States is important. That is why (legal) agreements are made at European level. These, in turn, are translated into national legislation in the Netherlands. This legislation helps to realise our DSM ambitions. For more detailed information and updates, please visit the official DSM website:

www.digitaalstelselmobiliteitsdata.nl/wat-is-het-dsm

(Dutch) National Access Point for Mobility Data (NTM)

The National Access Point for Mobility Data (NTM) is part of the DSM and helps with its implementation. The NTM arose from a European standard requiring every Member State to have a national access point for mobility data. The NTM therefore aims to make all (multimodal) mobility data in the Netherlands known, available, usable and reliable in one place. In concrete terms, it is:

Nationaal Toegangspunt Mobiliteitsdata

- The place where public authorities and market parties can publish, find and use mobility data. This data can be found in the Mobility Data Register.
- NTM provides insight into the quality of mobility data and offers advice on this matter.
- NTM is working to build an active community between providers and users of mobility data.
- Neutral within the mobility system: NTM facilitates and connects, without taking a stance. When insight is provided into the quality of a dataset, this is based on factual data. NTM does not formulate policy but provides other parties with data so that they can formulate policy, make decisions or develop applications.

[1] A data hub is an organisation, such as NDW or RDW, which collects data from various authorities and/or organisations in one place to consolidate and share it further.

European dimension Under the MMTIS regulations, countries must, among other things, make cycling data available for multimodal journey planners (statistical and dynamic data such as networks, parking facilities, journey times and availability of shared bikes/parking). Through NAPCORE (National Access Point Coordination Organisation for Europe), the Netherlands and France are working together on the standardisation of cycling data. NTM is the Dutch representative within this European collaboration.

www.toegangspuntmobiliteit.nl/themas/fiets

Relationship between the DSM and NTM

The NTM is mandated by Europe and helps shape the implementation of the DSM and is the central access point, where mobility data can be found and made available for use. Or, in other words:

- The DSM is the system and the agreements.
- The NTM helps shape the practical implementation of those agreements and ensures that all mobility data is available, discoverable and usable.

The DSM and NTM are therefore inextricably linked: without the NTM, the DSM would be a paper tiger, and without the DSM, the NTM would have no clear direction or standard.

National Roads Database (NWB / NWB+ / WNR)

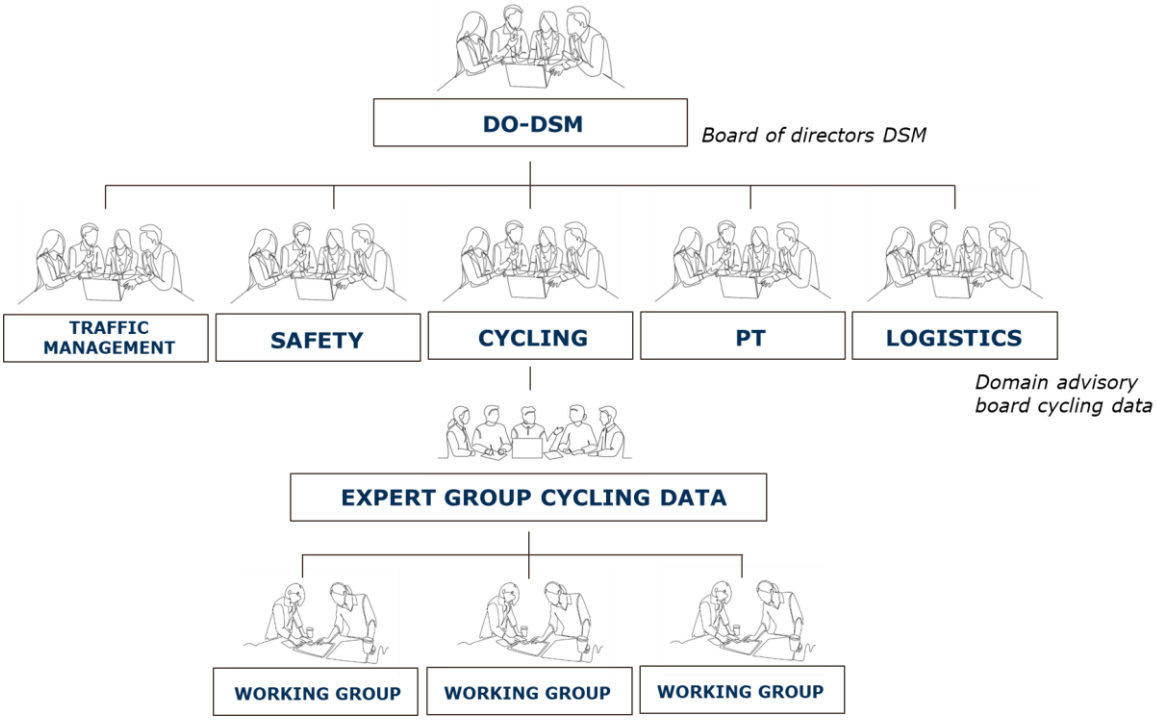
The National National Roads Database (NWB / NWB+ / WNR) collects and uses information on road traffic, including cycling, to help local authorities and other policymakers improve cycle paths and cycling facilities. Here is what the NDW does in simple terms:

- The NDW collects information on how often and where people cycle based on cycling-counters and traffic light data, developing the cycle network into a fully-fledged mode of transport within the National Road Database (NWB), and standardizing the storage of GPS data from cycling incentive apps.
- This information is stored in a standardised way so that everyone can use the same data.

In short, the NDW collects and uses information about cycling to help local authorities gain insight into the use of cycle paths and improve cycling infrastructure, thereby encouraging more people to cycle.

CONTEXT

In the fall of 2025, the action plan on cycling data was presented to and approved by the DSM Directors' Consultative Committee (DO). Within the DO-DSM, the active mobility team from the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management represents the cycling theme. This action plan was drawn up by the **Domain Advisory Board cycling data** (see 'Central role of the Domain advisory board cycling data'). Under this Tactical Table, the **Expert Group cycling data** has been organised, chaired by the NTM, in which various authorities are represented on both cycling data and policy. As there are different types of cycling data (more on this later), specific working groups have been organised. For example, the **NDW's working group cycling data** has been in existence for some time and deals specifically with cycling data at the NDW.



Central role of the Domain advisory board cycling data

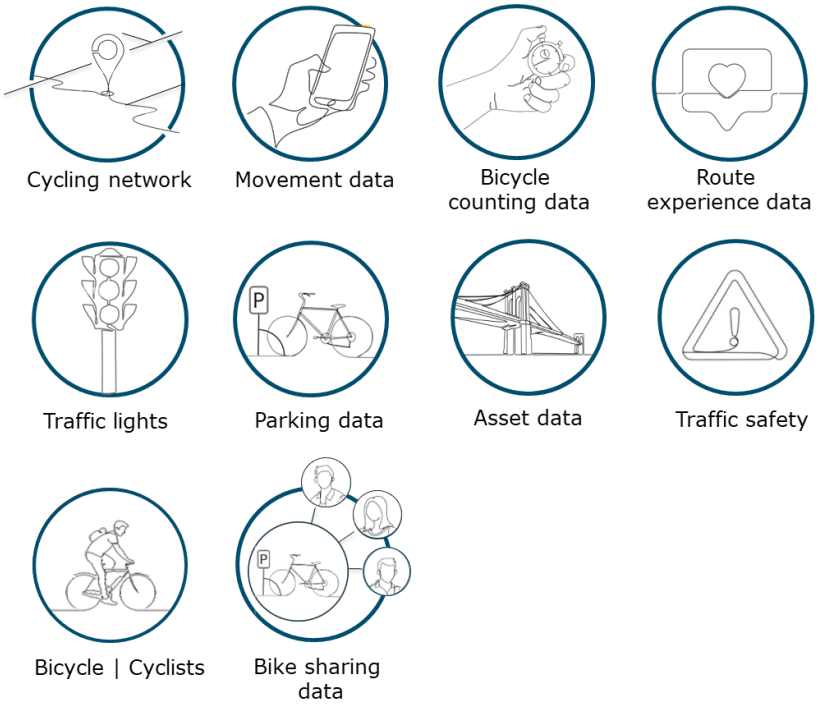
The Domain Advisory Board cycling data tactical roundtable promotes the use and (improvement of) the quality of cycling data, provides insight into data chains, fosters cooperation between data portals and links cycling data to broader policy objectives (mobility, sustainability, housing). Every year, the table draws up a joint roadmap, in consultation with the organisations involved. The Domain advisory board cycling data brings together Tour de Force, NTM, NDW, CROW and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management.

GETTING STARTED WITH CYCLING DATA

To increase cycling, efforts are focused on strengthening infrastructure, the improvement of bicycle parking facilities and the encouragement of cycling. For example, improving road safety is a priority on many policy agendas. The call for more and better cycling-related data is therefore nothing new. However, to increase the effectiveness of cycling policy, more and better insights are needed. Whereas the focus to date has been on the demand for cycling data, we must now shift our thinking towards generating valuable insights and actionable perspectives.

TYPES OF CYCLING DATA

As part of the implementation of the Digitalisation of Public Authorities programme, between 2019 and 2023, local authorities, counties and transport regions have set about accelerating the digitisation of 15 data items, including cycling data. However, on closer inspection, we see that cycling data consists of more components. The DSM distinguishes between 10 types of cycling data:



Whereas there used to be many separate initiatives in the field of mobility data, the DSM is working towards better collaboration, data assurance and the establishment of sustainable agreements. Within the Digital Framework for Mobility Data (DSM), parties in the mobility sector are working together to make better use of the power of mobility data. These include local authorities, public transport operators and navigation services. The professionalisation of mobility data has the following objectives:

- Informing travellers.
- Maintaining and managing the infrastructure.
- Making policy decisions.

ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT CYCLING DATA?

www.toegangspuntmobiliteit.nl/personen/personen/mirelle-peters

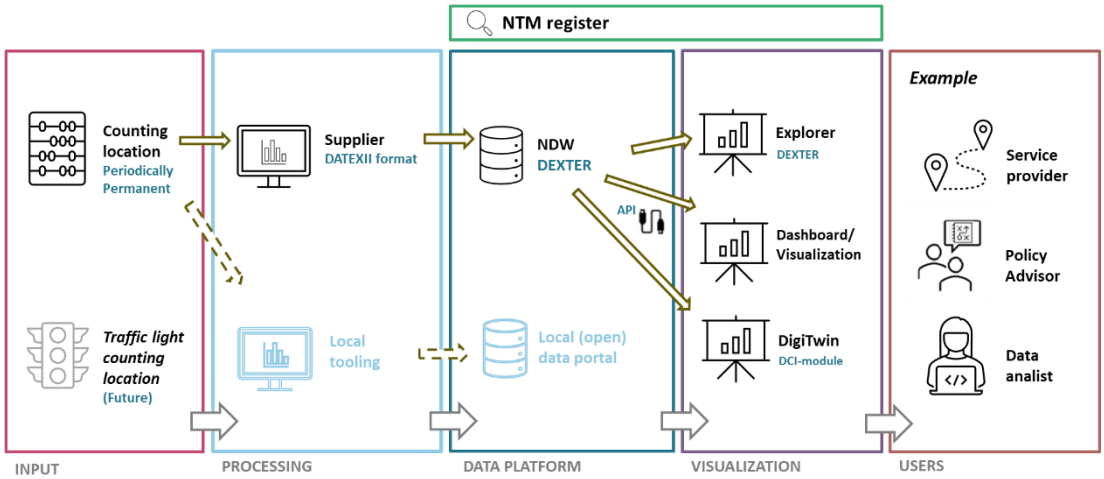
CYCLING DATA CHAINS

The data chain provides insight into the input data, processing, the data platform, the visualisation and the end user(s). To make the relationship clear between cycling data and actual demand, the tactical working group has taken the lead in developing **guidelines** and **data chains** for each data type.

The two guidance documents for bicycle parking data (parking facilities) and bicycle count data are now available on the NTM website.

www. https://www.toegangspuntmobiliteit.nl/themas/fiets

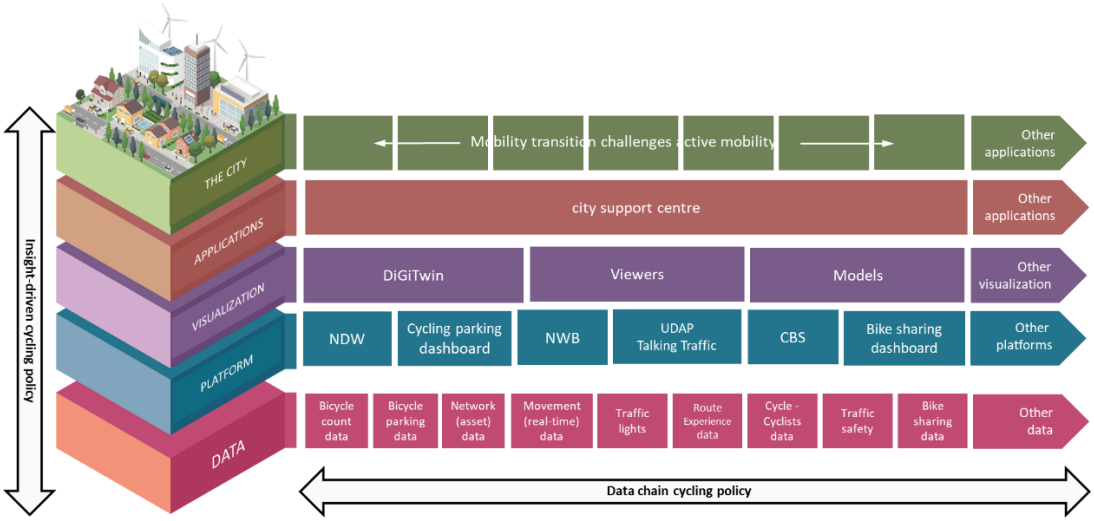
In addition, in collaboration with the cycling expert group, schematic representations of the data chains for network data (infrastructure), bicycle count data and (permanent) bicycle parking have been developed.



To illustrate: a bicycle counting data chain

DMI-ECOSYSTEM

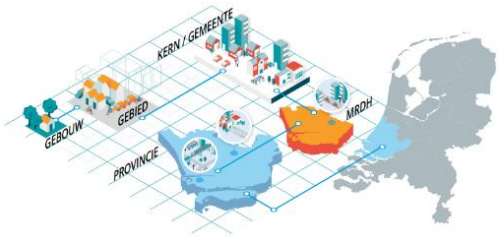
To accelerate innovation and collaboration in the field of data, a public-private platform has been established: the Dutch Metropolitan Innovations ecosystem (DMI). The aim is to accelerate sustainable urban densification and renew mobility.



Within the DMI ecosystem, the focus is on tangible results in terms of insight and actionable perspectives, helping public authorities and their partners in effective policymaking. The DMI cycling program focuses on promoting innovation and collaboration in cycling policy and infrastructure. In its development, three tracks were identified:

Connecting:

The Dutch ecosystem consists of various layers of government, private parties, civil society organizations and knowledge institutions. The goal is to bring these parties together to develop joint innovations that strengthen bicycle policy.

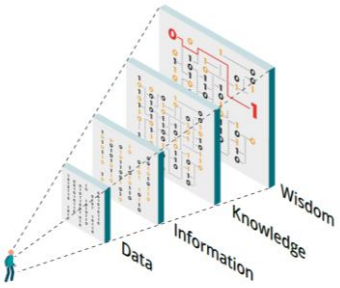


Accelerating:

The programme stimulates cycling policy development by using available data such as cycle counts, travel data and parking data.

Deepening:

By combining various data sources, broader insight is gained into the performance of the cycling network.



https://dmi-ecosysteem.nl/over-dmi

PRACTICAL COOPERATION

As a practical example of data collaboration, the cycling expert group has compiled an overview of possible use cases for GPS cycling journey data.

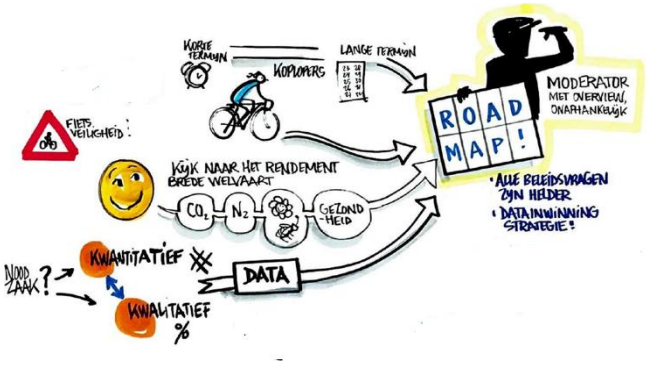
Until now, there had been no comprehensive overview of relevant insights based on cycling journey data for:

- Real-time traffic management
- Multimodal area utilization
- Transport planning
- Network design and performance
- Policy monitoring and evaluation

Ultimately, this should lead to insights into cycling volumes, route choices, speed, delays and barriers.

LEARNING FROM THE PAST

The arrival of the NTM and the establishment of the Domain advisory board cycling data within the DSM address the need for a coordinating body, as expressed by governments, businesses, and knowledge institutions during a LEF session in 2022. With this development, we are therefore marking the end of an era.



A reflection of Rick Lindeman

Former Tour de Force “wegkaptein Fietsdata” (road captain cycling data)

The start of the journey - *In 2017, national cycling policy still seemed stuck in the 90s. The government would react to rather than anticipate change. Cycling policy was also fragmented. Two key developments occurred: the e-bike made investments in regional cycle routes (formerly fast cycle routes) relevant, and data offered new insights, as became apparent during the national cycling census week. That year, I was given the role of Cycling data road captain. During my first inspection, it quickly became clear: everyone was talking about data, but no one was referring to the same thing. Data was scattered – among suppliers, in local council offices, each in their own formats.*

The first breakthroughs *- During the 2018 cycling conference, organizations including CROW, NDW, the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, and dozens of market players signed a letter of intent. It was a magical moment: for the first time, there was a common foundation. This collaboration gave rise to the ten data types, which we still use today.*

Hard lessons - *A partnership was also established with Talking Traffic, which focuses on smart traffic systems. Together, we explored the possibility of linking cycling apps to smart traffic lights (iVRIs), so that cyclists could request a green light more quickly. Cycling data was a by-product of that process, but a potential goldmine for the world of cycling policy. Unfortunately, the process did not go as we had hoped, and we all learnt valuable lessons.*

The first milestone - *In 2020, we reached our first milestone. Thanks to funding from the NDW, we were able to build a platform where all data from cycle counting points came together. This cycle counting data platform (DEXTER), launched in April 2020, has since become a hub for researchers and policymakers.*

Many challenges remain *- The issue of bicycle parking also proved to be a serious challenge. Local authorities and organisations such as ProRail sometimes counted the same bicycles but used different definitions. Through collaboration within the CROW Cycling Council, agreements were reached, standards developed and parking spaces made available online.*

New Heights - *Working with bicycle data remains difficult. The number of people who truly understand how to handle data is limited. Nevertheless, we see a new horizon in 2025 with the NTM and the consultation structure that has been developed. The next step is to enable more people to work with bicycle data, generate relevant policy insights and actionable recommendations, and strengthen and professionalize the foundation by improving the usability of each data chain. This will certainly bring new challenges and opportunities!*

Would you like to get started after reading the brochure?

On the **National Access Point for Mobility Data**, you will find available cycling data, guidance and explanations. The NTM is happy to help you get started!

Nationaal Toegangspunt Mobiliteitsdata

Mirelle Peters | Cycling Community manager

Want to know more? Take a look at the CROW knowledge café on cycling data!

(in Dutch)

Brochure by

Joost de Kruijf | Dutch Cycling Intelligence B.V.

In collaboration with:

Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Waterstaat

Nationaal Toegangspunt Mobiliteitsdata

DMI·ECOSYSTEEM

kennisplatform CROW

ndw

This is Dutch Cycling Intelligence!

ABBREVIATIONS

DSM	Digital Framework for Mobility Data (in the Netherlands)
DMI	Dutch Metropolitan Innovations
NAPCORE	National Access Point Coordination Organisation for Europe
NTM	(Dutch) National Access Point for Mobility Data
NDW	National Road Traffic Data Portal (NDW)
MMTIS	Multi Modal Travel Information Services
NWB	National Roads Database (NWB / NWB+ / WNR)
FBD	Floating Bike Data
(i)VRI	(intelligent) Traffic Lights
GPS	Global Positioning System
(C-)ITS	(Connected) Intelligent Transport Systems

“Cycling data and innovation are not an end in themselves.

It is a tool to gain insight into the role of the bicycle in the mobility transition, in order to invest effectively and increase bicycle use.“

Ronald de Haas | Program Manager, Tour de Force