



# Prague reducing emissions - one delivery at a time

## Prague, Czech Republic

### IN A NUTSHELL

Prague has been working with logistics companies in the city to create a pilot bike depot in a municipal parking lot. This depot allows companies to deliver an average of 6,500 parcels per month in the inner city by electric bike, reducing congestion and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and improving air quality by replacing fossil-fueled van transport.

### A pilot to improve the sustainability of cargo delivery

Prague has seen a rapid increase in the volume of deliveries being made by logistics companies due to the Covid-19 lockdown. The increase in emissions from combustion engine vehicles poses a challenge to the city's long-term efforts to reduce emissions and congestion in the city centre. This is why, in June 2020, Prague decided to transform a parking area into a delivery bike depot.

Named 'Depot.Bike,' the pilot's objective is to divert a portion of parcels being delivered in the city centre by van to delivery by cargo e-bikes. This alleviates traffic congestion in the city center, reduces noise, air pollution, and GHG emissions, and improves conditions for pedestrians. A second objective is to support behavioural change among residents to increase acceptance of bicycles as a mode of transport. By showing that bikes have their own rightful place in the vast logistics industry, the city wants to gain support to improve the cycling infrastructure. Because the bike depot was the first of its kind in the Czech Republic, Prague wanted to try out the model first on a small scale in the form of a pilot.

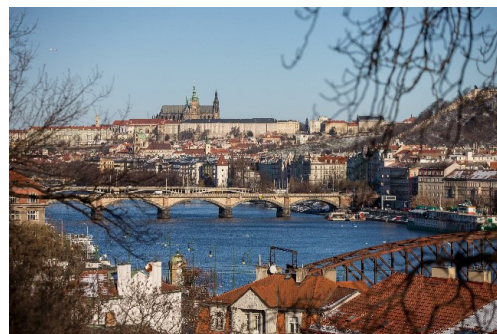
### Building the bike depot

After securing political support early on from the deputy mayors in charge of spatial development and transport, Prague City Hall coordinated all city agencies and stakeholders required to take the pilot from concept to reality. The Prague Institute of Planning and Development (IPR Prague) developed an initial feasibility study for the depot. Finding a suitable plot for the depot presented the first challenge, as it had to be under city ownership but underutilised, centrally located, and easily accessible from the outskirts - where logistics companies have their warehouses. The location 'Florenc' was chosen from four other possible parking areas presented by



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## PRAGUE



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<b>Population:</b> 1,309,000 (2019)	<b>Area</b> 496 km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Signatory to the Covenant of Mayors since:</b> 2015	<b>CO<sub>2</sub> emission reduction target:</b> 45% by 2030

the Prague Technical Road Administration<sup>1</sup>, which also provided 3.3 million CZK, or approximately €130,000 as the initial investment for the project.

Within five months of project approval, the pilot depot began operating under the management of the Prague Technical Road Administration and a Czech e-bike company. Depot.Bike functions as a transfer point for goods sent out by company warehouses in the city outskirts. Each of the eight logistics companies participating in the initiative has been allocated a container in the depot, where their goods are stored. From here, couriers pick up the goods, load them onto cargo e-bikes, and then transport them to recipients in the city center. Couriers are able to deliver up to 80 consignments per day originating from the depot.

The land that the depot is situated on is provided almost free of charge to the eight logistics companies. They make payments to cover the operational costs of the depot, thereby creating a loop that eliminates the need for the city to support the project financially, which makes it self-sustaining. For logistics companies, the bike depot offers an opportunity to make parcel delivery more sustainable, while responding to the rapid growth of e-commerce, the difficulty in finding parking in the city centre, vehicle access restrictions, and car congestion in general.

The project has been so successful that the city opened a second bike depot in Prague's Smíchov neighbourhood in November 2021.

## Reduced deliveries by combustion engine vehicles

As a result of cooperation between many different sectors, the bike depot project has removed a number of large vans and trucks from the city center, thus directly reducing air and noise pollution and contributing to the decarbonisation of the city. Almost 80,000 packages have been delivered since the start of project operations in November 2020, translating to approximately 41,000 kilometres traveled by bike.

## Next steps for a biking (delivery) culture in Prague

Thanks to the success of the pilot phase, Prague has decided to continue the project indefinitely. All of the logistics companies that signed on for the pilot will continue using the depot at Florenc. The project is evolving to improve its efficiency in getting packages to the depot, loading bikes and incorporating new technologies in their e-bikes. The depot will eventually be expanded to include a logistics hub where it will be possible for individuals to drop off or pick up packages by foot, thus further reducing the number of kilometres that the packages must travel by vehicle. The depot is also intended to serve as a presentation space for new technologies in light electric vehicles (such as electric cargo bikes), which emphasizes its function as a symbol of a new biking culture in the city. Depot.Bike has been received with enthusiasm by residents and logistics companies alike, and the cargo bikes have become a seamless component of the city's bike traffic.

<sup>1</sup> A municipally-owned company known as *Technická správa komunikací hl.m. Prahy, a.s.* in Czech

### KEY FIGURES

An average of **6,500 parcels** delivered monthly in the inner city by bike

An average of **3,400 km** travelled by cargo bike each month

**40,714 km** covered by bikes replacing fuel-engine vehicles in 2021

**78,767 parcels** delivered by cargo bike in 2021

**8** logistics companies involved

Second delivery bike depot opened in Prague in December 2021

### FINANCING THE PROJECT

- + **Financing source for initial investment:**  
Prague Technical Road Administration.
- + **Total amount:**  
€130,000 (3.3 million CZK)  
Public land leased free of charge to logistics companies  
Operating costs of the depot covered by logistics companies

### USEFUL LINKS

- [Article on Prague's delivery bike depot \(2021\)](#)
- <https://iprpraha.cz/stranka/3997>
- [Short YouTube video about the project](#)



### CONTACT

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