

## **EuroVelo11 route in Poland – the Slovak border to Cracow (and back)**

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The **EuroVelo 11** route is **not signposted in Poland**. Only northern stretch near the Lithuanian border is signposted as **R-11** route and this doubles **EuroVelo 11**. However, long parts of the **R-11** route are off-road and not suitable for loaded bicycle touring. Sticking to paved roads is usually a better choice than following the trail.

The southern part of **EuroVelo 11** may be more challenging as the Malopolska region next to Slovakia is very hilly and there are few alternative routes of quality allowing for loaded bicycle touring. This include the surface, gradients, motorized traffic. Please note that all „bike trails” signposted in Poland you may meet on the way are generally meant for **off-road cycling** (this include the international routes signposted with green R-number, not just colour tab local trails). If you see a tiny white square with black bike and a colour tab or arrow below it (or even a green bicycle sign with R-number, for international routes), be sure sooner or later it will end up in muddy trail you can't ride with your trailer, bags or tires - or you will spend more time than ever thought.

The GPS track that will lead you from **Piwniczna Zdroj** to downtown **Cracow (Kraków)** is available from [www.rowery.org.pl/ev11](http://www.rowery.org.pl/ev11). You should follow it closely in some places as there is **no signage** that can be used for this cycle route. At present, there are **three \*.gdb files**: from **Cracow to Slovakia**, from **Slovakia to Cracow** and third one with alternative route in case of **flood** (when **fords** on Tarnawa stream may be unpassable). The routes to and from Slovakia differ slightly and the third file contains minor changes, too. Any comments are **very much appreciated**.

### **The route is planned to:**

- avoid heavy traffic,
- minimize the altitude differences and
- to keep you on paved surface
- facilitate long distance loaded bicycle touring, with heavy bags and trailers

As you will see, these goals have not been reached all the time (except for the last point!). However, the route seems to be the best possible compromise and can be improved in the future, by paving the short unpaved sections and building small bridges and short stretches of new roads (or even cycle tracks) that would connect the existing good quality parts of the route.

I did this route several times on a loaded hybrid bicycle with Marathon XR tires. The off-road part near Tarnawka stream was visited on a dry sunny day. The off-road part of the route is less then 2-3% of all its length (unless you choose to cycle on the dykes near Nowy Sącz, which could make off road part perhaps 5%). Off-road parts do not involve any descents at all, so probably any road tires and any kind of bicycle can be used, the only drawback being slowing the trip down.

## **CYCLING FROM SLOVAKIA TO CRACOW**

You will enter Poland either in **Leluchow** (Slovak **Circ**) or **Piwniczna Zdroj** (Slovak **Mnisek nad Popradom**). Both border crossings are located on Poprad river and the first one avoids hills at the border with Slovakia. If you enter Poland in **Leluchów**, you have to follow the main road. It is very cycle-friendly until **Muszyna**. Then it becomes a more busy, with some heavy traffic regional road DW971. You have to follow it up to **Piwniczna Zdroj**. It is mostly flat as it runs along the railway track and the Poprad river.

Some bike tourers, however, say there is an option to cross the Poprad river in **Muszyna** and follow local unpaved route to Slovak **Legnava** and then local paved route to **Kace** and then to **Mnisek** to enter Poland again.

If you enter Poland in **Piwniczna (Mnisek)**, you have to follow the national road DK87. „National” sounds a bit dangerous but in fact it is much calmer than regional DW971. The only obstacle is hills just next to the border and a short stretch of historic cobblestone surface in downtown **Piwniczna**. Both DK87 and DW971 meet in **Piwniczna** and you better **leave** them both here. When cycling from **Leluchow** through **Muszyna**, turn right just after the bridge on both river and railway track into a tiny and steep street. When approaching from **Mnisek nad Popradom**, cross the DK87 and DW971 junction straight ahead and enter the tiny steep street. It will lead you to the train station (direct, though rare connections to **Nowy Sacz**, **Cracow** and **Warsaw**).

Please note that there is a „red tab” cycle trail between **Leluchów**, **Muszyna**, **Piwniczna** and **Nowy Sacz**. It is a part of Carpathian Cycle Trail and while it is marketed as a touring route it is unusable for loaded touring. Parts of it may be, but other – crucial - parts are completely unsuitable for anything than suspended XC bike with knobby tires.

Just next to the Piwniczna Zdroj **train station** behind railway crossing, there is a pedestrian bridge over Poprad river. Cross it and follow the paved road on the right river bank to the left. Stick to the river – you may have to ride some stretches of unpaved road along the river, but unless there is flood, you can safely and comfortably reach good, paved road that leads straight to **Rytko**. This road is much better than the DK87 road on the left Poprad bank. It is plain flat, there is almost no motorized traffic and views are much better. You will have to switch the river bank in Rytko, just when you see the **Rytko Castle** on the right hill on the right river bank. There is a „red tab” cycle trail signposted that continues on the right bank but you better not try it.

So you are back on the DK87 – and see the oldschool cobblestones again! Well, it is a bit more than half a mile. Look out for next bridge on your right just north of **Rytko**. It may hardly be visible in a distance but you better leave the DK87 there (possibly using the **GPS track**). Immediately behind the bridge turn left and – yes! - follow **the red tab cycle trail signage** there. It first leads through unpaved, muddy road next to the Poprad River. But the reward is great: a long calm ride on paved road with no traffic as far as to **Barcice**. This is where you must return to DK87. You are in **Stary Sacz** outskirts, an interesting place to visit to your left. However, if cycling to **Cracow** or **Nowy Sacz** you will need to return to DK87 again. The DK87 will lead you to **Nowy Sacz** through a bridge on Poprad River. Unfortunately, there are no cycling facilities in **Nowy Sacz** and you have to follow the heavy traffic and the regular road signs.

However, two other options exist. One is simple: turn right just after the bridge (see **GPS track**) and try to find any path to the Poprad river you just crossed. Follow the singletrack along the river under the bridge (may be really muddy at the beginning!). After the railway bridge you will see a broad plain with dykes. There is a rideable singletrack on the dyke and it will lead you downtown. Then follow road signs to **Wadowice**, **Rabka**, **Limanowa** or **Kraków** (DK28) to find the Dunajec river bridge and get to the other river side. It seems that any bike (perhaps except road one with very narrow tyres) will do the muddy dyke trail, although it will be slower than following the (heavy) traffic of DK87.

The other option is detouring the whole city of **Nowy Sacz** with no chance to see its downtown or the railway station. Before the Poprad bridge in **Nowy Sacz**, cross the junction of DK87 with a new road leading to the north, to the new bridge on Dunajec river. Take it (it even boasts some cycle

tracks, however bad), cross Dunajec and turn right on the other river bank. You will have to cross the DK28 national road and take the local road straight ahead to **Limanowa** through **Rdziostow** and **Marcinkowice**.

When cycling from downtown **Nowy Sacz** you have to reach the same point of DK28 and turn right to **Rdziostow** and **Marcinkowice**. There is also possibility to avoid the hilly **Rdziostow** road along the railway tracks on the left Dunajec bank. At least part of this route would be however **unpaved, muddy and sandy** and you have to ford a tiny stream. It starts near the DK28 bridge on left Dunajec bank. In **Marcinkowice**, however, you must return to the main road to **Limanowa**.

The road northwest of **Marcinkowice** is moderately hilly. When going to **Cracow** you have to pedal uphill almost all the way. In **Limanowa**, you reach the Market Square and must follow the DK28 national road you meet there (no bypass - all heavy transit traffic travels downtown). The street is however broad enough to accomodate cyclists safely. Look out for the junction with regional DW965 road (direction **Bochnia** and **Nowy Wiśnicz**) **to the right**. This DW965 road is busy and narrow. Luckily enough, you need to follow it for less than two kilometres. Watch out: **left turn** (direction **Mstów** and the **Tymbark Factory**) may be dangerous as there is no left turn island between the lanes and traffic is significant.

You now have a scenic and comfortable road to **Piekielko**. In **Piekielko** you have to **turn right** to **Kisielów**, **Rupniów**, **Nowe Rybie** and **Stare Rybie**. This is the most steep and requiring part of the road. In **Kisielów**, **turn left** (direction **Rupniów** and **Szyk**, though there is no signage at this Y-shaped junction, only a tiny brown-white tourist direction to a historical church in **Szyk**). Expect **very hilly and steep** stretch of road and then a **long** and **very steep** downhill part to **Szyk**.

**WARNING:** in case of severe rainfalls and flooding, you may want to choose another route here. Instead of turning left in **Kisielów**, follow the road straight ahead (or to the right if you like) and road signs to **Nowe Rybie**, **Stare Rybie** and **Tarnawa**, as the crucial part of the proposed route may be unpassable. See the third („flood”) **gdb** file for your GPS. This alternative route is extremely hilly, with a number of very steep stretches and the paved surface is full of potholes so even descending is not easy or fast – this is the reason for the „ford route” proposed below. Whichever route you choose, you will finally get to **the same place** north of **Tarnawa**.

From **Szyk** you need to follow the road to **Sadek**. It is flat and comfortable. Look for a bus stop at your right and a **yellow strange looking house** (kind of postmodern kitch „castle”) to the right. This is where you have to **turn right** into tiny paved road, running into a valley. There is no road sign or any other way to tell where to turn. **Watch your GPS here to find the right turn!** Follow the tiny paved road between buildings. The **paved surface will end** and after a hundred meters you will see a small concrete bridge. Follow the country road on the other side and turn right just before first houses. Then follow the trail, with the forest just to your right. The **unpaved trail is 1.5 km**.

When you reach the Tarnawka stream again, don't be surprised: **there is no bridge**. There is a **ford**. The Tarnawka stream is tiny (2-3 meters wide and very shallow – 0.2 meter), but in time of severe rainfall it surely will grow bigger (my guess is that 1 meter depth will be extremely rare anyway) . While it is impossible to cycle this ford, you can walk on the river bed stones safely (many stick out of the water and allow for dry feet crossing) and push your bike to the other side. When water is high, you most likely will have to take your shoes off and wet your feet. Now, you have to follow the country road. In a minute or two you will see **another ford**. This one is much easier, with concrete slabs lying on the riverbed. Were it not for the extremely muddy and slippery approach on one river bank, you could easily ride your bike across it.

Now, north of the last ford the trouble is over. One of the most relaxing parts of the journey just begins. The road soon becomes paved and you cycle along Tarnawka river all the time to a junction with another paved road (this is where the optional, hilly route ends). On the way, you have a chance to buy honey from a local **bee yard** advertising on your left (look for „Pasieka” sign on your left). At the junction turn left in the direction of **Lapanów**. Follow the road to **Boczów**. In **Boczów**, you may want to turn left to **Grabie** and then turn right near a bridge to **Lubomierz** (another option is to go to **Lapanow** and before the main road, DW966, turn left to **Wolica** and **Lubomierz**). Expect an uphill ride – your destination is first the tiny village of **Lubomierz** and then – **Zagorz**.

**WARNING:** this part may be a bit confusing, so **use the GPS track**. There are two different GPS tracks for this part of the route (the one via **Wolica** is in the „flood version”). **Watch your device closely**. You want to get to **Lubomierz** and then **Zagórz**, avoiding the DW966 road from **Lapanów**.

When in **Lubomierz**, there are two ways to **Zagórz**. First, make sure you follow the road that **does NOT** lead to **Raciechowice** (the main one). At a signposted junction next to a forest **turn right** (not left) and enter the forest. You will go downhill all the time. In the forest, look out for a tiny paved road to **your left** and take it. It will lead you almost traffic free to **Zagórz**. However, if you just sped past it, do not mind. You will reach the bottom of a tiny river valley. At the end, you will meet the regional DW966 road in **Zagórz**. Turn left and expect a brief but demanding uphill ride. If you did not miss the tiny traffic-free paved road in the forest, you will reach **Zagórz** too, however without the downhill and uphill ride. Now you have to **turn left** to DW966 regional road to **Gdów**.

The road is busy but bearable. In **Gdów**, you cross the Raba river and leave the DW966. **Turn right** into a tiny street on a left-turning bend with white and red chevrons, some three-four hundred metres from the bridge. Follow it and at the next junction (the DW967 regional road) take the road that continues north (you must **turn left** and **then right** just after 20-30 metres). Leave **Gdów**.

You follow this road to **Liplas**. In **Liplas**, **turn right** at the end of the road (you will have local football field to the left), and take the first paved road **to the left** (road, not a courtyard!). The local bicycle trail is signposted („black” tab signs). Follow it, turning left in a Y-junction (and then switch to „green tab” trail, turning right some hundred meters farther), or – if you loose the trail – at end of the road at a T-junction, **turn left**. You may have not noticed it, but you are in **Wiatowice**.

Head west, along the Królewski Potok stream hidden in trees to your right. You will have to turn right at one place that is hard to notice! Do **not** follow the local bike trail signage. Instead, **watch your GPS carefully**. There is a junction with road to **your right** that goes some 130 degrees back and slightly uphill. From a distance, it looks like a car parking, not a junction. Follow the road and you will be in **Zablocie**. After a small bridge, there will be a defunct bus terminal – **take the road to the left**. Now look **to your right** for a large metal warehouse or farm – **or watch the GPS again**. There will be a tiny road to the right. **Turn right**. It will go north. At the end of ascent, **turn left** and in 100-200 metres you will see another junction with signposts leading to **Bodzanow** to the **right**, with local green bike trail signs. Follow it downhill to the junction with the National Road DK4. Wait for the lights to change into green and **turn left**.

The National Road is very busy, with lots of heavy traffic, but it has perfect surface and very broad paved shoulders (or two lanes on uphill stretches). This is definitely the best way to enter Cracow from south east. Very often there are traffic jams before **Wieliczka** and you just pass by the stopped cars using the broad shoulder. The only drawback is noise and sidewind gusts when you leave the parts of the road hidden between the hills. Do not try the presumably calmer DW966: the traffic there is extreme (especially in peak hours), with lots of heavy goods vehicles and **no shoulder**. Cars

speed past you at no distance, parts of the road have very poor surface and it is winding and steep.

In **Wieliczka**, you may want to leave the DK4 just by **turning right** at a tiny **two-level junction** just after you see an old and defunct road junction to the left. If you do not plan to visit Wieliczka now, follow DK4 up to the traffic lights with signpost for **Czarnochowice** to the right. Turn right and immediately turn left taking small road running parallel to DK4. You may want to follow it to the end. It is **Wygoda** and **Potrzask** street. (Beware, as of summer 2008, there is motorway bridge under construction underway, you have to detour it locally). At the end, follow the street to the left (**Sucharskiego**, later **Bieżanowska**). You should reach the railway crossing.

### **You are in Cracow. Which is not the end of your journey yet. How to get downtown?**

Well, you can put your bike on the **Wieliczka – Krakow** train (extra cost is 4,5 PLN for each bike aboard the train). But the train goes no more often than once an hour. So why wait? Continue along the **Bieżanowska** street that will lead you to the **Wielicka** street at the end. But since **Wielicka** street is a really busy multilane corridor with speeding cars, heavy trucks and buses, you may want to use **local cyclists** shortcut **watching the track on your GPS**.

At one point, **Bieżanowska** street bends left and goes uphill. Here you should turn right into tiny **Kolejowa** street, and turn left into even more tiny, gravel covered dead end. Avoid the industrial gates and warehouses. **Watch the GPS track** (or look for bicycle tire traces in the dirt) and you will find a tiny singletrack that will lead you through the railway warehouses (there is no property trespassing, do not worry) to **Prokocimska** street. Follow it to the **Plaszów Railway Station** (most express or InterCity trains to **Warsaw do not** run from this station!), then **turn left** and reach the last stretch of **Wielicka** street. You can use the tiny gravel road that starts just to your right behind the tramway stop - or venture to the street.

No farther than at large traffic light junction just after the railway bridge you will have to join the traffic in the street. You are downtown, in the **Old Podgórze** district. At the next, Y-shaped junction with traffic lights, turn right towards the Wisła river. Behind the bridge, there is the former Jewish district of **Kazimierz** to your left and the **Old Town** straight ahead, with Our Lady's church visible from the bridge. Follow the **Starowislna** street to the **Old Town**. As of autumn 2008 there will be a new cycling facility at the **Dietla** and **Starowislna** junction to allow cyclist safely straight ahead to the **Market Square**. **Have a nice stay in Cracow!**

### **EXTRA INFO:**

- **Don't expect restaurants** on the way apart from Nowy Sącz and Piwniczna or Muszyna. Pizzerias may be possible in larger cities (Wieliczka, Gdów, **possibly** Łapanów, Limanowa).
- **Groceries** are available in most villages on the way and usually stay open until 6 p.m or even until 10 p.m in the cities listed below (Sundays may be an exception). Expect regular foodstuffs (bread, dairy stuff, chocolate, bananas, juices and soft drinks).
- **Pharmacies** and **Post Offices** are at least in Muszyna, Piwniczna, Nowy Sącz, Limanowa, Łapanów (a few kilometres away from the route north of Tarnawa and west of Zagórz), in Gdów, Wieliczka and Cracow. They generally close at 6 p.m or earlier.
- **Trains** are available only in Muszyna, Piwniczna, Stary Sącz, Nowy Sącz, Wieliczka and Cracow (between Muszyna and Nowy Sącz there are more stations where local trains stop).
- Between **Kisielów** and **Tarnawa** there is no Orange PL mobile coverage. If roaming, switch to automatic network selection.

## CYCLING FROM CRACOW TO SLOVAKIA

From the **Market Square (Rynek Główny)** take **Sienna** street, second to the right from Our Lady's (Mariacki) Church just opposite the Adam Mickiewicz monument. Cross the junction and continue along tramway tracks in **Starowiślna** street. Cross the Wisła River and turn left at the large Y-shaped junction. Follow the street. Beware: often traffic jams block the passage as there is little room for outmanouevring the cars. After the first large junction (the railway bridge ahead) you should think of turning left and using the unpaved track behind the tramway line (a cycle track is planned there but it will not be built before late 2009 or later). You can do it either at the large traffic lights junction you crossed, at the junction where tram tracks leave the middle of the road (beware, this one is tricky and dangerous) or at traffic lights for pedestrian crossing two hundred metres farther. The last possibility is the next huge traffic lights junction where you should turn left.

Take **Dworcowa** street to the **Kraków – Płaszów** railway station. **Turn right** in front of it, taking the **Prokocimska** street. At the end, you see a dead end sign next to industrial area gate. Ignore the sign and take the road. The surface is poor but this **shortcut** is very popular with local cyclists. Use the **GPS track** or follow the traces of bike tires in the dirt. There will be a short unpaved singletrack stretch but soon you will reach tiny **Kolejowa** street and then **Bieżanowska** street. It will take up some zigzagging but when you see the „big” street, **turn left**. Follow it until the railway crossing.

Here, you either continue along the **Bieżanowska** (later: **Sucharskiego, Kokotowska**) street and look out for the **Potrask street** to the right, or **turn right** after the first larger junction with some monument, following the **GPS track**. Either way, you have to reach **Potrask** and **Wygoda** streets, continuing to the traffic lights junction with national DK4 road, the Wieliczka bypass. At the junction, **turn left** and continue on the broad paved shoulder (the shoulder disappears at ascents, where two lanes appear instead to facilitate overtaking). The traffic can be very heavy but the shoulder gives you a lot of space, surface is perfect and the route is much more comfortable than the alternative regional DW966 road. Soon (late 2009), the A4 motorway will be built, relieving most of the heavy traffic from the DK4.

Continue along DK4 until traffic lights junction in **Bodzanów** (the first traffic lights junction after **Wieliczka**). **Turn right** and go uphill to the next junction. You arrive in **Zabłocie**. **Turn left** and after some 200 metres **turn right** (you may have a chance to see local bicycle trail sign, a „green tab” one at a pole to the right). At the end of descent, **turn left** again. The road is flat, empty and very comfortable. At a small roundabout type junction (in fact, a bus terminal) **turn right** and leave **Zabłocie**. At the junction, **turn sharply left**. The empty road along Królewski Potok stream leads to **Wiatowice**. Watch out for a tiny junction to the right. A „green tab” cycle sign may be visible on a pole to your left (yes, left – but you have to **turn right**).

**Watch the GPS track, you may get lost here as no good signposting for the route is available.**

After you turned right, there will be another T-junction, where you have to **turn left** (the „green tab” cycle trail goes right, now you may want to follow „black tab” trail to the left) and after a hundred meters – you **turn to the right** again. If you missed the first turn to the right, in Wiatowice there is another chance to turn right – look for road signs directing you to **Liplas**.

In **Liplas**, the road ends in T-junction. **Turn right** and follow the road until you see a football field to your left. **Turn left** just before it and continue to **Gdów**. In **Gdów**, you will have to cross the regional DW967 road. **Turn left** and just after 20 meters **turn right** again! The tiny road will lead you to the regional DW966 road you have to take. At the T-shaped junction **turn left** and follow the road. You cross the Raba river bridge and continue along DW966 to **Zagórz**. The road is busy but

not that bad. Expect some heavy vehicles and more traffic in peak hours and at holiday times.

In **Zagórz** you will see a roadside parking separated by white and red bollards to the right, with a local grocery shop and two local roads entering DW966 from the right (DW966 bends left and goes downhill). Follow the local one that goes **straight forward** and do not leave it until the T-junction in a forest. It is almost traffic-free. **Turn right** at its end and then, after a brief ascent when leaving the forest **turn left** (NOT right to **Raciechowice**) at the junction. You are in **Lubomierz**. At next junction, follow the road **to the right** to **Grabie**. In **Grabie**, **turn left** to **Boczów** and then **turn right** again in direction of **Tarnawa**.

**Warning:** You may want to follow the **GPS track here**. Notice that two different routes are possible to **Boczów**. The other GPS track is in the third, „**flood version**” of \*.gdb file.

Going south of **Boczów** in direction of **Tarnawa** you pass a small bridge and after one kilometre there is a **T-shaped junction** with a small **roadside chapel** and cross ahead. **Turn right** here. There is a „Pasieka” advertisement, which means **bee yard** and honey for sale just before the junction. You will have the opportunity to buy honey. The proposed route is flat and very scenic. However, parts of it are unpaved and require fording a stream.

**WARNING:** in case of severe rainfalls and floods, you may want to choose another route here. In this case, **turn left** and follow road signs to **Tarnawa**, **Nowe Rybie**, **Stare Rybie** and **Rupniów** (the „**flood**” **GPS track**) as the crucial part of the proposed route may be unpassable or difficult. The alternative route is paved but the surface is very bad. It is extremely hilly and steep. In case you want to check if the „flat” route is passable, it will be less than **6 kms return way to the right** from **here**.

The proposed flat route goes along Tarnawka stream. After turnign right, you enjoy paved, flat route and the stream hidden in trees to your left. However, the **paved surface ends** and you have to follow a gravel country road that leads to a **ford**. The river bed is covered with concrete slabs and you can easily ride the bike across (unless the water is high), however the other river side is muddy and slippery. Then follow the country road along, with the forest on your left. The **unpaved stretch is 1,5 km long**.

There will be another ford on your way, a bit more demanding than the previous one. You will have to dismount your bike and push it. There are some large riverbed stones sticking out of the water so you can walk across the stream pushing your bike with dry feet. However, in time of heavy rainfall, the water may be much higher and you will have to take your shoes off and wet your feet to push the bike. The Tarnawka stream is some two metres wide and less than 0.2 metre deep at fords and I do not think it ever gets deeper than one metre but in case of severe flood it may be unpassable.

When you crossed the stream, take the trail and ride the bike to the houses (**do not** turn left **before** them, as the trail splits on the way!). Only then take the gravel road **to the left**. It will take you to a small brigde (no fording this time) and soon you will be on a paved road again. At the end of this road, you will be in **Sadek**. Here, **turn left** at the T-junction in direction of **Szyk**. The road is good, flat and very calm. However, the most difficult part is just in front of you – a very serious **ascent** to **Rupniów** and **Kisielów**.

In **Szyk**, there is a Y-shaped junction. To the left, there is a tiny road that leads to a historic wooden church and to **Nowe Rybie**. To the right, there is the main road to **Kisielów**. The latter is a very long and very steep ascent and my suggestion is to avoid it (on the other hand, it may be a good choice

for the **opposite direction**). **The tiny road to the left** has almost no traffic and most part is comfortably (or almost) flat. The worst part is extremely steep indeed - but rather short. You will either push your bike uphill or cycle undisturbed by cars. Then you arrive in **Nowe Rybie** and have to follow the main road **to the right**.

Whichever route you choose, you will reach **Piekielko**. Here, you **turn left** and continue along railway track and Łososina river to **Limanowa**. This part of the route is flat, calm and very comfortable. Just before **Limanowa** you arrive at a T-shaped junction with regional DW965 road. **Turn right** and continue until another T-junction with national DK28. The DW965 is busy and the traffic is heavy. Fortunately you need to cycle no more than two kilometres along it.

The junction with DK28 (where you **turn left**) may be a bit confusing. When you are already in DK28, you **must not** change the lane as there is continuous white line between the right (presumably slow) and left (fast) lane. Apparently, the traffic engineers did not take cyclists into account. Apart from this, the DK28 is pretty comfortable as it is wide enough to accommodate cyclists. Follow the DK28 to the very centre of the city and – at the roundabout that is the Market Square – leave it into the **Matki Boskiej Bolesnej** street (it is **to the left** of the DK28) in direction of **Mordarka** and **Pisarzowa**.

The road will lead you to **Nowy Sącz**. There is little traffic. The road is hilly, but most of the road will be a long moderate descent to **Marcinkowice**. There is a long and steep ascent between **Marcinkowice** and **Rdziostów** just before **Nowy Sącz**. You can possibly avoid it by **turning left** in Marcinkowice, crossing the railway track and following the local road **to the right**. It is gravel road, and then muddy and sandy and you will have to ford a tiny stream on the way. You will arrive in **Nowy Sącz** along the railway track and the Dunajec river.

In **Nowy Sącz**, things get complicated. It is a rather big city and it has no cycling facilities. To get downtown, you have to enter the DK28 road (**turn left**) to get to the only Dunajec river bridge in town. Follow the road signs to get to the Market Square or the railway station. To continue to the Slovak border, you will need to follow road signs for the national DK87 road to **Piwniczna (Mnisek nad Popradom)**. However, there are two other options.

One is to try to get to the Dunajec river dykes from the downtown (right river bank) **Nowy Sącz**. There is singletrack type route on top of the dykes that leads to the railway bridge on Poprad river and then a muddy but passable trail to the bridge of the DK87 road. To get to DK87 you will have to follow any path from the river bank either from the railway bridge or from beneath the road bridge south of it.

The other option is to bypass **Nowy Sącz** without visiting downtown or the railway station. You need to find the main **Marcinkowice** and **Rdziostów** road junction with the national DK28 road and continue south along the Dunajec river in direction of **Golkowice** (or **Stary Sącz**). Then **turn left** to the new (2008) bridge on Dunajec river in **Stary Sącz**, (even some cycling facilities, wow!) and to the new road that connects it to DK28. At the junction with DK87, you may want **to turn right** to visit **Stary Sącz**, or just continue **straight ahead** along DK87 to **Piwniczna**.

DK87 is rather busy, with a number of heavy goods vehicles so you may want to avoid it. It is also pretty hilly at some places. The alternative is the right Poprad river bank. While the road there is not continuous, I would still advise to use it when possible. The first opportunity is in **Barcice**, just south of **Stary Sącz**. You **turn left** in direction of **Wola Krogulecka (not Popowice)**, cross the Poprad and take the tiny paved route to the right (follow the „red tab” cycle trail signage here). It

will lead you as far as to **Rytro** – however be prepared that the last few hundred meters will be unpaved and possibly muddy road next to Poprad river. Here is the bridge you must use to switch to the other Poprad side. Do not follow the „red tab” cycle trail signage as it becomes really a tough MTB track. Take DK87 again and turn left. Soon, you will have a rare chance to ride the oldstyle cobblestone surface for nearly a kilometre. At the end, there is a bridge to your left. Turn left to switch to the other Poprad river bank. Follow the red tab cycle trail signage **to the right**.

This part of the route will lead you directly to **Piwniczna Zdrój**. Some parts of the road will be unpaved, and a kilometre long stretch is covered with concrete slabs on the river bank (possibly unpassable under heavy floods). Most part of it has good paved surface and is much more comfortable and faster than the surprisingly hilly DK87 on the other Poprad bank. In **Piwniczna**, you will see a pedestrian bridge to the right. Use it (watch out: it is very steep at the beginning) and you will reach the **Piwniczna Zdrój** railway station. After crossing the railway tracks, turn left and follow the street to the junction of DK87 and DW971.

If you plan to go to Slovakia via **Piwniczna (Mnisek nad Popradom)** border crossing, go straight ahead along the DK87. The route is rather calm, with little heavy traffic but hilly at the end. You will have a chance to see the cobblestone surface again for a few hundred meters. If you plan to enter Slovakia in **Leluchów (Circ)**, turn left and cycle along DW971 to **Muszyna**, and there turn right to **Leluchów**. If DW971 has some heavy traffic, it is mostly flat and comfortable. And the last part between **Muszyna** and **Leluchów** will be really bike friendly.

I **hear** that there is a possibility to cycle to **Muszyna** through Slovakia, too, avoiding the busy DW971. In **Mnisek**, turn to **Kace** and then follow the paved road to **Legnava** and then short unpaved road to **Muszyna Zapopradzie** back in Poland. In **Muszyna**, turn right to **Leluchów** and then to Slovak **Circ**. When cycling to Slovak city of **Poprad**, use the **Maly Lipnik** road, not the main **Mnisek – Poprad** road.

In the future, the route to **Leluchów** may lead through Slovakia and the existing local road east of **Kace** near **Mnisek**, avoiding the busy DW971 road in Poland with the help of some pedestrian and cycling bridges on Poprad that would allow switching river sides. There may also be some improvements on the way between Slovak border and Cracow.

For more information see [www.rowery.org.pl](http://www.rowery.org.pl) or contact Marcin Hyla at [cinek@rowery.org.pl](mailto:cinek@rowery.org.pl)