

## **Copenhagen-based tech startup connects rentable bikes all over the world to your phone**

**Donkey Republic is taking their electronic locks and bike-sharing platform on a ride around the world. The team aims to turn the bicycle into the hero of public transportation and a catalyst for greener, more liveable and less traffic-congested cities. With a recent EUR1,5 mil investment from The Danish Growth Fund, the company is ready to disrupt urban transport globally.**

The Donkey solution, launched mid-2015 and currently available in 7 countries, involves a smart electronic lock mounted on any bicycle and an app that commands it. The lock is designed to protect against theft, rain, and frost, with a battery that lasts at least a year before requiring replacement. Bike rental owners buy Donkey locks to mount on their bicycles, thus making them available on the Donkey Republic platform. Riders book and pay for those bikes online, in advance or on the spot. They then use the Donkey app to locate and unlock the bikes 24/7 – by connecting to their smart locks through Bluetooth. In other words, they need no internet on their phone to unlock and lock the bikes as many times as they want, but also no docking stations, no cash, no leaving of ID cards or deposits, no complying with rental shops' opening hours. Modern travellers benefit from absolute freedom and convenience in setting their explorations on two wheels, in just a few clicks.

### **Riding the green wave**

"The need for affordable and sustainable mobility in cities is growing exponentially, and bikes are an obvious solution. The sharing economy already has a good grip on the transport sector, but no current bike-sharing system can scale due to their need for public subsidies. What we are bringing to the table is a green and inexpensive solution to urban transportation that can be run without subsidies and, most importantly, completely automates bike rentals globally" explains Erdem, CEO of Donkey Republic.

Many countries are pushing forward urban mobility initiatives that promote cycling for short-distance travels, and municipalities like Paris, London, Barcelona or New York already show encouraging results. This trend works as a tailwind for Donkey Republic in their building of a future where it will be natural for anybody who enters a new city to want to bike their way around. If they use the Donkey app to get their ride in a few clicks - even better. With the startup receiving new capital through the EUR1,5 mil investment from The Danish Growth Fund and the Luxembourg-based venture capital fund Howzat, that future just got closer.

At The Danish Growth Fund, the expectations are high as to the growth opportunities for the startup. "Donkey Republic hits spot-on with several of today's big trends, by combining sharing economy and bicycle transportation - both lately gaining ground in cities around the world. Their platform has already proven attractive to both customers and end-users, in Denmark and abroad, which creates a strong potential for scaling," says Jesper Lilledal, Investment Director at The Danish Growth Fund's department of direct investments, VF Venture.

### **Seeking growth opportunities**

Donkey Republic is currently targeting the tourist segment, by partnering with businesses like bike shops, hotels and tourist centres. However, the company sees future market opportunities in the commuters segment. As Erdem puts it, "public transportation is costly to run and maintain. It makes sense to look at alternate solutions like bicycles shared

through an automated system as part of the public transportation flow, e.g. when the citizens need to cover the last few miles from the train station to their workplace.”

**In Denmark, there are currently 300 bikes that can be rented through Donkey Republic's platform, distributed in 40+ hubs. Other hubs have been created in Sweden, USA, UK, Spain, New Zealand and Finland, which amount to more than 500 bikes - with the prospect of reaching a couple of thousands. An average of 85 rental days are booked in a day on [www.donkey.bike](http://www.donkey.bike) globally.**

For more information, please contact:

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#### **About Donkey Republic**

The company, which was founded in 2014 by Rune Kokholm, Erdem Ovacik, Alexander Frederiksen and Jens Frandsen, wants to disrupt urban transport through cycling. The company developed an electronic lock and an app to command it, as well as a booking engine and user-centred rental flow. Read more at <https://www.donkey.bike>.

#### **About The Danish Growth Fund**

The Danish Growth Fund is a state investment fund that contributes to the creation of new companies by providing capital and expertise. Since 1992, The Danish Growth Fund has, together with private investors, co-financed growth in more than 6,000 Danish companies with a total commitment of more than DKK 17 billion. Read more at [www.vf.dk](http://www.vf.dk)