

Cycle-Friendly Cities – Southern Region in Norway

Abstract:

As a part of the National Transport Plan, the NPRA got new challenge:

Encourage cycling

The Norwegian Ministry of Transport and Communications forwards the responsibility of initializing and coordinating the work for encouraging cycling to the NPRA.

The main target is thereby not to build an amount of cycle lanes or cycle-tracks, but raising the bicycle use by 50% in “cycle-friendly city”-projects.

The NPRA was through the National Transport plan encouraged to work with better facilities for cyclists, especially in cities and also with a strong focus at safe routes to school. In our CFC-projects money funded by the government also might be spent on investments on “other” roads, like roads under the municipality administration.

The money to be spent for the next four years in CF-Cities is € 12 mill. We ended up with 5 cities in our CFC-project. In addition we will spend € 10 mill yearly in bicycle infrastructure.

Organization:

Regional CFC network:

We have established a network among the cities to share experiences and to coordinate the work and progress in the cities. The network will meet frequently, and circulate between the CFCs.

Local CFC project group:

The CFC project groups are responsible for the project execution. This group include technical planners, staff from the health, education and environment protection sections from the municipality and NPRA and media consultant.

CFC reference group

There will be established a reference group consisting of local clubs, associations and persons. The police office and the Norwegian Council for Road Safety also will take part in the CFC-projects.

We have just started and these projects are in our region, pilot projects. Through this we want to collect experiences in five different, but comparable projects. The evaluation will give useful know-how to future CFC-projects.

Cycle-Friendly Cities – Southern Region in Norway

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About The Norwegian Public Roads Administration

The Norwegian Public Roads Administration is responsible for the planning, construction and operation of the national and county road networks, vehicle inspection and requirements, driver training and licensing. It is also authorized to grant subsidies for ferry operations.

On matter pertaining to national roads, the Public Road Administration is under the direction of the Ministry of Transport and Communications. On those related to county roads, the Regional Director is subordinated the county legislature.

The Public Roads Administration is under the leadership of the Directorate of Roads, which is an autonomous agency subordinated the Ministry of Transport and Communication. The Public Roads Administration encompasses five regional offices.

Vision:

- *“On the road to a better society”*

The objective of the Norwegian Public Roads Administration:

- *To develop and maintain a safe, eco-friendly and efficient transport system. This is being done on a sound, professional basis by interacting with politicians, users and other interested parties.*

Organisational cooperation

The NPRA is represented in over 200 working groups and committees in a wide range of international organisations. The content, extent and duration of these engagements vary from short term research projects to ongoing work of political nature.

The main NPRA cooperation partners in Africa are Botswana, Tanzania and Zambia. In these countries we are working with many different projects.

National Transport plan 2006 2015 - National Cycling Strategy:

The Norwegian Government will take action towards increased bicycle use by:

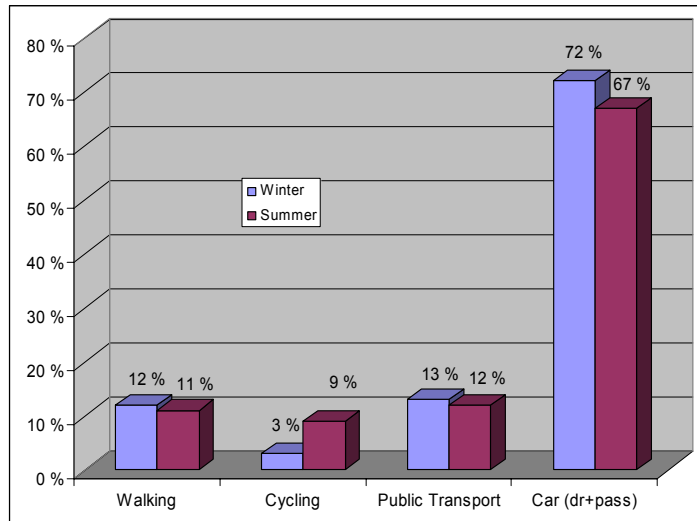
- *strengthening the activity in building new bicycle infrastructure and other facilities for cyclists and pedestrians*
- *making adjustments in traffic legislations to raise the safety and attractiveness of cycling*
- *taking initiatives and communicate information and “know how” about cycling and cycle-infrastructure to local governments, public transport companies, employees and others.*

The most important element of a National cycling strategy is development and maintenance of cycling infrastructure.

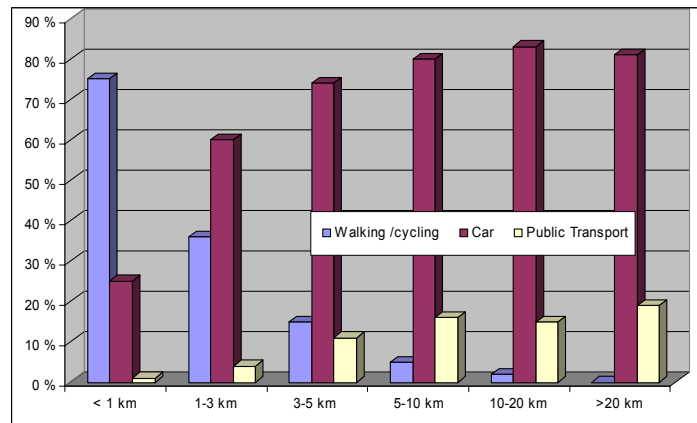
Use of bicycle in Norway:

The national travel survey from 2001 gives some figures about how the Norwegians transport themselves. The figures below are “to and from work”, a survey which tells more about cycling than other parts of the survey, done by the Norwegian institute of Transport Economics. In Norway the average distance to work is about 13 km, and the mode of transport to and from work, all trips, split on winter and summer is shown here.

As we see, walking represents 11-12% of all trips to and from work. Walking even increases in winter. Cycling represents 3% of all the trips in winter and 9% in summer. Especially car use decreases in summer, may be they are cycling?



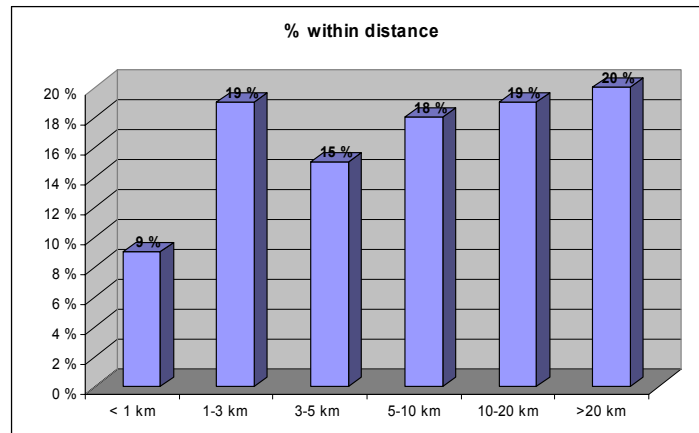
For the shortest distances, less than 3 km, walking and cycling are representing a certain amount of the trips. But as the figures also tell, even at trips less than 3 km, 60% of them are done by car...



More than 40% of all trips to/from work are shorter than 5 km, which is a distance where the bicycle absolutely could be an alternative for many people. Close to 30% of the trips are 3 km or shorter.

The potential for increase of bicycle use, and also walking is absolutely in place.

A survey from Oslo tells that about 50% of the population use their bike at least once a week. But 31% don't use a bicycle at all.



Regional Action Plan 2006 – 2009, Southern Region

As a part of the National Transport Plan, the NPRA got a quite new challenge:

Encourage cycling

The Norwegian Ministry of Transport and Communications forwards the responsibility of initializing and coordinating the work for encouraging cycling to the NPRA.

The main target is thereby not to build an amount of cycle lanes or cycle-tracks, but raising the bicycle use by 50% in “cycle-friendly city”-projects.

Cycle-friendly cities (CFC) in the NPRA southern region:

The NPRA was through the National Transport plan encouraged to work with better facilities for cyclists, especially in cities and also with a strong focus at safe routes to school. We have traditions for building separate cycle paths outside the cities, to separate pedestrians and cyclists from heavy car traffic, but we not focused much at the city centres.

The Norwegian road network has three levels, the state roads, county council roads and local (municipality) roads. Traditionally financing infrastructure investments and maintenance are done by the different levels. Very often, an effective cycle route is along parallel streets to the main road, with another responsible body. In our CFC-projects money funded by the government also might be spent on investments on “other” roads, like roads under the municipality administration.

In advance of our work with the action plan for the upcoming period we invited all the 25 (small) cities in our region to take part in a competition to be one of five CFC's. The money to be spent for the next four years in CF-Cities is about € 12 mill. In addition we will spend ca € 10 mill + pr. Year in bicycle infrastructure in our region where we have ca 900 000 inhabitants on 48 866 sq.km. About 78% (700 000) of the population live in urban areas.

We ended up with 5 different cities in our region to take part in the CFC-project.

- Mandal is the most southern city in Norway, with a population of 9 800. Living areas are close to the city centre and working areas. The municipality also has ongoing “health”-projects about encouraging people to live and move in a more healthy way. Mandal city has a lot of old (small) wooden houses and narrow streets, and is a very popular area for summer holidays and boat trips.

- Grimstad is a city with a population of 9 200, and the city has a lot of students (1 500) living close to the Agder University College. Grimstad has invested much money in cycle paths outside the city centre. This has been built as separate projects, and not as a part of a plan for cycle infrastructure.
- Notodden city has a population of 8 300, and the city is a typical “inland” city situated by a lake and river with an elevated waterway with connection to the sea. The area is typically a part of a valley, with the city centre on the flat area and living areas in the hillsides. Notodden is known for, as the say: Europe's Finest Blues Festival, in August every year.
- Sandefjord city has a population of 37 700, and is close to the sea. Sandefjord is a city rich on traditions within shipping and culture. The vikings have left traces here, international VIPs used to visit the city's bath and the whalers have had their grand era. Sandefjord is also attractive for summer activities, and the surroundings are rather flat.
- Kongsberg city has a population of 17 200 and is a typical inland city. In Norway, Kongsberg is well known for its silver mines and also for its industry. Kongsberg is a popular winter sports area, but also an attractive area for recreational cycling in summer. Kongsberg is situated in Numedal which is called the “middle age valley”.

Our experience during this process has been that there has been a broad political interest of the CFC-project, it has been very high, compared to our assumptions. Of course this is very positive, having future funding of the projects in our minds.

Organization of the CFC-project

Regional CFC network:

We have established a network among the cities to share experiences and to coordinate the work and progress in the cities. The network will meet frequently, and circulate between the CFCs, with excursions included.

Research:

The network also will organize different activities, which will be similar for each city. Examples are pre and post surveys on use of mode of transport in different situations, like to work, to school, “shopping” and leisure. There will be detailed surveys on bicycle use of course. There will be surveys on road accidents with bicyclists involved. This is necessary to have comparable information and facts from the CFC's from the beginning and the end of the project period. Main targets for the CFC-projects are increase of bicycle use, decrease of accidents involving cyclists, better infrastructure, and better maintenance of cycle facilities, and the surveys will have special focus on that. Some of the activities will be done as projects at the University highschools in our region.

Education:

The network also organize excursions to other (European) cities which are ahead as cycle friendly city. The network will take care of education of planners and others involved in the CFC-project. It's also necessary to have seminars on themes like maintenance, signing etc.

Information:

The network will organize and coordinate a web-site for the regional CFC-project in addition to the CFC's local web-sites. We also plan to produce newsletters, papers, magazines etc coordinated for all the CFCs. The target group for this information is the citizens, which also are potential bicyclists.

Local CFC-projects:

Board:

All the CFC-projects are organized in cooperation between the local municipality administration and the NPRA district office. The projects normally have a board consisting of the mayor of the municipality, leader of the local planning (technical) office, and a project leader, who also is responsible for daily project administration. From the NPRA the leader of our district office is represented as well as the leader of the local "planning and administration"-office. The board is responsible to the progress as well as quality management of the project. The board also sets the yearly progress-plan within the frames of the available funding.

CFC project group:

The CFC project groups are responsible for the project execution. This group include technical planners, staff from the health, education and environment protection sections from the municipality and NPRA. Media consultants also take part in the projects.

The technical part of the project includes:

- Plan for the city cycle network
- Plan for improved safety for cyclists and pedestrians
- Signing recommended cycle routes
- Bikeway inspections
- Improve street crossing facilities
- Building new infrastructure
- Improvements on existing cycle facilities
- Better maintenance (especially in winter)
- Install cyclist counters and verify the bicycle use at certain stretches.
- Signing cycle routes in the local recreational areas.

To increase the bicycle use it is necessary to have a communication plan. The CFC-project wants to create different activities to promote cycling and an active lifestyle. All the CFC's are rather small and compact with (for most of the citizens) short distances between different destinations. Therefore the "distance-barrier" is not a big problem to them. The activity and information part of the project will include activities like:

- Bike magazines
- Cinema advertisements
- Info boards
- Articles in local newspapers
- Announced and organized cycle tours
- School activities
- Company agreements (promoting cycling to work) including the Municipality administration and the NPRA
- Etc.

CFC reference group

There will be established a reference group consisting of local clubs, associations and persons who are involved in promoting physical activities or are skilled on cycling in all its facets. The local police office and Trygg Trafikk - The Norwegian Council for Road Safety also will be welcomed to take part in the CFC-projects.

Project Progress:

We have just started. These projects are in our region, pilot projects. Through this we want to collect experiences by running five different, but comparable projects. The evaluation of this "exercise" will give us useful know-how to our future CFC-projects.

Thank you for your attention..