



11 cities on 2 wheels for 3 years

The Nordic Cycle Cities Project - Experience and results



Nordiske cykelbyer

Foreword

11 Nordic communities join together to promote cycling

Cycling is a healthy and environmentally friendly transport mode; it improves public health and reduces CO2 emissions from transport. For this reason 11 Nordic communities in Denmark, Norway and Sweden decided to join together in a cooperative venture to encourage cycling in the Kattegat-Skagerak region.

The interregional project was co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund IVA program for the Kattegat-Skagerak region.

The participating municipalities were:

- Denmark: Frederikshavn (lead partner), Randers, Silkeborg, and Viborg
- Norway: Sandefjord (Norwegian project owner) and Kristiansand
- Sweden: Mölndal (Swedish coordinating partner), Varberg, Svenljunga, Tranemo and Mariestad

Cycling addresses major challenges

In recent years politicians and public authorities have been confronted with a number of major challenges including rising health care costs and international regulations aimed at reducing CO2 emissions.

Experience from other cycle city projects shows that investing in cycling significantly improves public health, resulting in significantly lower health care costs. Furthermore, when citizens switch from cars to bicycles road congestion and CO2 emissions drop. Making cycling a priority is a forward looking, win-win solution.

The cornerstone of the project was to develop new approaches through innovative knowledge sharing, collaboration and concept development. The project partners met regularly throughout the entire period to learn from each other's and other players' experiences so as to be better equipped to successfully deal with the challenges of promoting cycling locally.

Ownership and anchorage

Throughout the project the partners focused on creating political commitment and ownership of the promotion of bicycle transport and on solidly anchoring it in the municipal organization. The project also focused on creating campaigns and activities for citizens, the purpose of which was to encourage drivers to switch from cars to bicycles as their daily transport mode."

In the present publication we've collected the experience gained in the project and give specific examples of the activities we organized. It is the hope of the other project participants and myself that other cycle cities, present and future, may find here a systematic, structured framework that will prove useful in their own efforts to promote cycling.

We hope you enjoy it.



Lars Møller
Mayor
Lead Partner,
Frederikshavn Municipality



Finn Rasmussen
Project manager
Lead Partner,
Frederikshavn Municipality

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The Nordic Cycle Cities Concept

Between 2009-2011 11 Nordic communities collaborated on the interregional Project Nordic Cycle Cities, the aim of which was to encourage more citizens to cycle.

The 11 communities found themselves facing a host of challenges when it came to cycling:

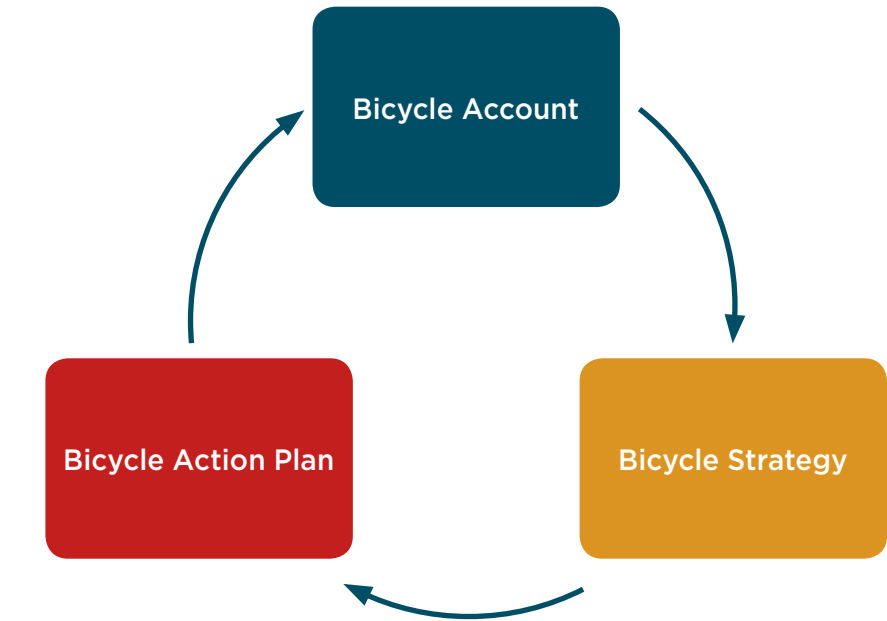
- Fewer and fewer people use bicycles as a transport mode.
- CO2 emissions from motorized traffic are on the rise.
- Health care costs resulting from physical inactivity among citizens are on the rise.
- Cycling promotion is often a random, ad hoc affair.

These were the challenges the three year Nordic Cycle Cities project set out to address. The aim of the project was to devise common methodologies and solutions in order to create a solid foundation for future cycling promotion. To achieve this the 11 municipalities developed a three pronged strategy:

- Quality assurance and systematization of cycling promotion.
- Citizen activities such as promotional campaigns, information and events.
- Investing in a bicycle friendly urban environment.

Process plans
A key element of the interregional collaboration was a jointly developed process plan for drawing up the bicycle strategy and bicycle action plan, and the bicycle account. Drawing on the experience of other cycle cities, the participants drew up their own joint process development plan as the starting point for the individual municipality's work.

One of the main focus areas of the planning process is to promote citizen and stakeholder involvement so as to create a broad basis for cycling promotion. Some municipalities chose to follow the process plans to the letter while others adapted them to local conditions and only followed selected elements. See the actual process plans for bicycle strategy, bicycle action plans and bicycle accounts at www.nordiskecykelbyer.dk.



Organizational anchorage and political ownership
The primary aim of Project Nordic Cycle Cities was to create a solid platform for future cycling promotion in each of the 11 communities by drawing up a number of core strategic documents that would establish political commitment and ownership of cycling promotion and ensure that it was solidly anchored in the entire municipal organization across all disciplines.

- The three core documents are:
- **A bicycle account**, or balance sheet, which contains key performance indicators for bicycle transport, ensures knowledge building, and provides a solid foundation for drawing up a bicycle strategy and action plan.
 - **A bicycle strategy**, which defines the visions, goals, objectives, and focus areas for bicycle transport.
 - **A bicycle action plan**, which operationalizes the strategy into concrete actions and timelines.

This systematic, holistic approach to cycling promotion was highly successful in anchoring the project politically and administratively in the local communities, which was one of the main objectives of the project.

”

For us, the main thing is that Nordic Cycle Cities got cycling onto the political and municipal agenda to a far greater extent than before. Drawing up the bicycle action plan gave us a concrete plan for addressing 7 focus areas and the structured approach to bicycle strategy, the bicycle action plan and the bicycle accounts really seems to have given the coming cycling budget allocations a major boost. The Nordic Cycle Cities project is almost over, but it feels as though it's just starting.

Ulf Bredby, project manager, Nordic Cycle Cities, Mölndal.

Interregional collaboration and exchange of experience
The aim of bringing 11 Nordic municipalities together was that they should each impart new knowledge, share their experience from former cycling initiatives, and gain new insights from working on the project.

”

The best part of the collaboration with the other Nordic countries was the professional feedback. It was fantastic how it made us see things differently when we were back at work planning cycling promotion. The discussions made us question our own legislation. The network and the exchange of experience among all 11 of us were invaluable; this is something we'll be able to use for many years to come.

Gitte Merstrand, project manager, Nordic Cycle Cities, Silkeborg Municipality.

The ongoing professional discussions and exchange of ideas were a source of inspiration to the participants and ensured a high standard of cycling promotion in the individual municipalities. The fact that the participants represented a wide

range of professional disciplines (traffic engineering, urban planning, climate, health, tourism, and communications) deepened the collaboration, creating a positive synergistic effect

Working groups
Working groups were established from the outset to serve as focal points for the discussions and exchange of ideas. There were four working groups: Children on bikes, cycling to work, security and safety, and serving cyclists better. The working groups' mandate was to provide a survey of existing experience in their own working area and develop new ideas for concrete citizen-oriented local activities.

Inspiration
The project involved three annual meetings to exchange knowledge and ideas. In addition, study trips were arranged to Lund and Odense, generally considered to be two of Europe's leading cycle cities.

Both cities have been successful in establishing a cycling infrastructure, giving priority to cyclists, and encouraging more people to cycle by means of information and campaigns. The visits were a real eye

opener for many of the participants, showing them what a systematic and holistic approach to cycling can achieve.

Nordic Cycle Cities, in contrast to former cycle city projects, focused on small and medium sized communities. The communities differed from each other in terms of size, demographic makeup and topography. The 11 municipalities are:

- Denmark:**
- Frederikshavn (Lead partner)
 - Viborg
 - Silkeborg
 - Randers

- Norway:**
- Kristiansand
 - Sandefjord

- Sweden:**
- Varberg
 - Mölndal
 - Svenljunga
 - Mariestad
 - Tranemo

Bicycle Account

A bicycle account is a key element of systematic cycling planning, and forms the basis for the bicycle strategy's overall goals and objectives, and the bicycle action plan's concrete initiatives. It provides a number of performance indicators and a survey on how citizens rate the municipality's performance when it comes to cycling.

What do cyclists think?

Cyclists themselves are the best judges of cycling facilities, which is why a major element of a bicycle account is a citizen survey targeting local cyclists and non-cyclists concerning their transport habits, their reasons for choosing their preferred transport mode, and, especially, what could motivate them to cycle more. In addition, citizens are asked to point out specific locations where they feel unsafe or insecure, where cycle tracks are lacking or in poor condition, where bicycle parking facilities are inadequate, etc.

The Nordic cycle cities drew up two bicycle accounts during the course of the project, of which two citizen surveys were an integral component. Keeping regular tabs on the effect of cycling initiatives enables the local authorities to evaluate their success in achieving their objectives so it's an excellent idea to draw up a bicycle account every two years.

What data is typically included in a bicycle account?

- Data from survey of travel habits
- Data from citizen satisfaction surveys concerning attitudes to cycling, obstacles to cycling, and satisfaction with local cycling facilities
- Road safety data
- Local traffic count data if possible

The Nordic cycle cities drew up a joint process plan for developing bicycle accounts.

For further information see www.nordiskecykelbyer.dk



In Silkeborg, before Project Nordic Cycle Cities, we had neither a bicycle account nor any other report on the state of cycling facilities. But as we worked with the bicycle account we systematized the data collection process for the first time by simultaneously counting the number of bicycle parking places, the number of kilometres of cycle track, and by collecting other local cycling data. We were also able to carry out many bicycle counts at various locations thanks to Interreg, which co-financed 8 new counting stations.

Jane Næsborg, engineer, Technical and Environmental Administration, Silkeborg Municipality.

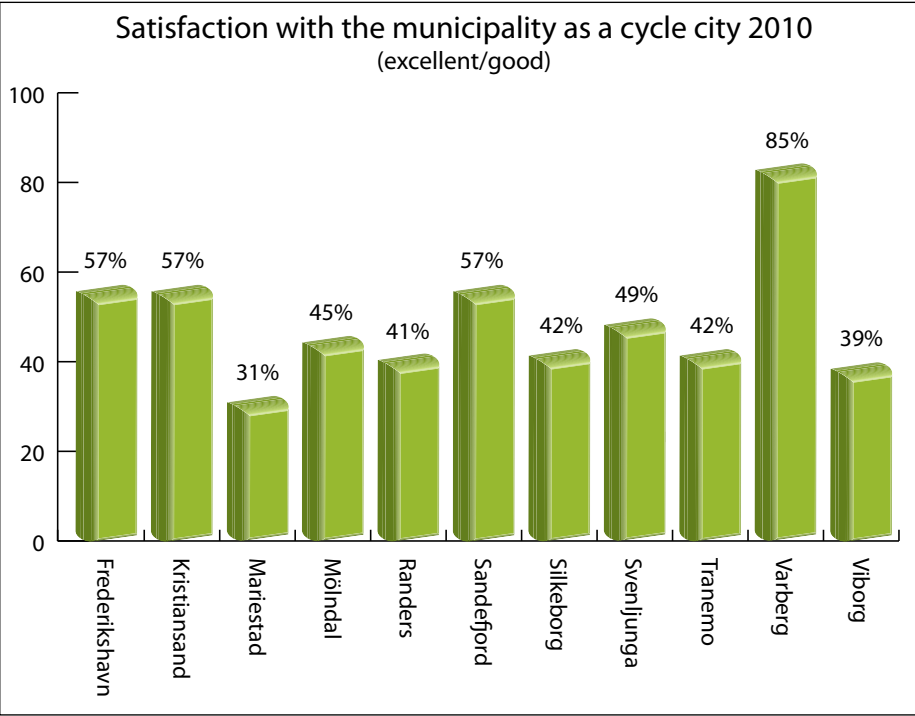
Bicycle Account

Citizen satisfaction

The 11 municipalities conducted citizen surveys in connection with the bicycle accounts of 2009 and 2010. Among other things, the surveys asked cyclists to rate their overall satisfaction with various local cycling facilities.

As the diagram shows, there is considerable variation in citizen satisfaction. Varberg has a top rating: 85% of cyclists are satisfied with the municipality as a cycle city. Second best are two Norwegian communities and Frederikshavn where cyclist satisfaction is almost 60%. The other municipalities rank between 40-50% with Mariestad ranking lowest; here only 31% of cyclists are satisfied.

Citizen satisfaction data is primarily of interest to the individual local authority, which can use the data to prioritize resources and initiatives. If the local authority conducts the surveys on an ongoing basis the bicycle account can be useful in documenting whether the initiatives have had the desired impact and whether the bicycle strategy objectives have been achieved.



More cyclists in Sandefjord = NOK 25 million annual profit

Sandefjord is an excellent example of how a bicycle account is an effective instrument for prioritizing cycling initiatives. The Norwegian national travel habit surveys and regional cycle city surveys have carried out bicycle transport measurements since 2005 and can document an 81-92% increase in bicycle transport between 2006 -2010. In 2005 4.4% of all journeys were cycled; in 2009 the figure had risen to 8%. The Norwegian Board of Health evaluated the cost-benefit effects of the increased use of bicycles and calculated that the annual benefit of cycling was NOK 25 million.

Bicycle Account spurs Randers to action

In 2009 the Randers bicycle account showed that only 26% of cyclists were satisfied with cycle track and cycle lane maintenance (road surface, sweeping and snow clearance.) This resulted in the local authorities allocating funds to prioritize maintenance and improve cycling facilities.



Photo: Randers Municipality

Bicycle Strategy

A number of the participating municipalities had previously drawn up cycle track plans or transport plans which would often contain a section or two on bicycle transport. However, prior to the project none of the cities had any experience working strategically and holistically with bicycle transport. Drawing up an overall bicycle strategy was therefore a challenge to everyone.

What is a bicycle strategy?

A bicycle strategy aims at focusing, systematizing and prioritizing bicycle transport initiatives. It contains:

- The municipality's vision for bicycle transport
- Prioritized focus areas
- Concrete, measurable objectives

The strategy must be politically approved to ensure that it is solidly anchored in the municipal organization and in line with other municipal initiatives.

All 11 of the Nordic cycle cities formulated bicycle strategies on the basis of a long-term process focusing on citizen and stakeholder involvement, the aim of which was to ensure widespread support for the bicycle strategy from citizens, politicians and other stakeholders.

The project partners jointly developed and tested a process plan focusing on a high level of citizen and stakeholder involvement. For the most part everyone followed the main steps of the process plan below :

1. Overview and analysis
2. Stakeholder analysis
3. Vision seminar
4. Drafting the cycle strategy
5. Workshop – input for defining objectives
6. Drawing up the cycle strategy
7. Hearing
8. Political approval and PR

The bicycle strategy process plan may be downloaded at:
www.nordiskecykelbyer.dk



I think what was most productive for us in Kristiansand was working with the bicycle strategy and the bicycle action plan. The work was productive since it resulted in major funding to expand the cycle track network. The objective to double bicycle transport within 10 years has been incorporated into other plans and strategies. Working with Nordic Cycle Cities has strengthened all regional cycling promotion efforts, and the contact with the other Nordic cities has proved invaluable; it really gave us a professional boost.

Siri Gilbert, project manager, Kristiansand Municipality

Political ownership is a prerequisite

The first step when it comes to formulating a bicycle strategy is to gain an overview of existing policies and plans to ensure that the strategy is in line with other municipal visions, objectives and focus areas. Politicians must be involved so they can feel ownership for the bicycle strategy.

One way of working with holistic cycling promotion is to establish an internal working group within the local authority including representatives from different sections and administrations such as health, climate, operations, children, young people, etc. This gives cycling promotion a political and organizational legitimacy within the municipal organization across sections and administrations.

Listen to different interests and exploit local resources!

Many people have an opinion on and an interest in cyclists and cycling facilities. To meet them halfway the majority of the cycle cities performed stakeholder analyses as a component of the bicycle strategy process. The aim of the analysis was to provide an overview of internal and external competencies, resources

and stakeholders so as to be able to identify any special interests and obstacles in relation to future cycling promotion activities.

On the basis of the stakeholder analysis the cities established reference groups consisting of ordinary citizens and other stakeholders, such as local cyclists, cycle clubs, recreational clubs, trade associations, and major employment nodes. The aim of the reference groups was to ensure that the city's cycling initiatives were broadly anchored and that local resources and competencies were effectively utilized.

Project experience shows that there was a lively external interest in joining the reference groups. Unfortunately it turned out that it was difficult for the 11 Nordic cycle city project managers to find time to meet regularly with the reference groups, which was subsequently a source of disappointment for the participants.

A number of participants stated that the group's potential to act as active ambassadors for cycling promotion could have been better exploited, especially during campaigns. Reference groups are therefore highly recommended. However,



Photo: Viborg Municipality

it's important to align expectations from the outset so that participants are aware of the degree of participation they may expect.

Viborg's vision

Since citizens are the ones who know best what cycling in town is like, an obvious step is to involve them in the process.

In Viborg the local council held a 4-hour vision seminar for citizens, politicians, external stakeholders and internal staff across administrations. 65 people participated in the seminar, including citizens, politicians,

interest organizations and municipal employees. The participants were given the task of formulating a joint future vision of Viborg as a cycle city and of providing ideas for focus areas on the basis of a report on the current status of bicycle transport.

The participants discussed visions, focus areas and objectives for Viborg, cycle city of the future. Workshop facilitation successfully raised the level of debate from discussing the details of local cycle track construction to formulating future visions, focus areas and concrete objectives.



The Vision seminar was fantastic because we got so many different stakeholders to get together at a meeting to discuss Viborg as a cycle city. The turnout was impressive and the general enthusiasm helped boost bicycle transport in Viborg. We now have a firm foundation for a broad collaboration on cycling promotion, which means that cycling promotion in Viborg extends far beyond the Roads and Transport administration's area of responsibility. Anders Korsbæk Jensen, deputy chairman, Technical Committee.

A Nordic Cycle Cities result

In the municipalities where the project managers focused on carrying out stakeholder analyses and organizing workshops for citizens, colleagues, external stakeholders and politicians, two results were noted:

- Political and organizational support of the bicycle strategy and the bicycle action plan increased.
- Cycling promotion objectives became more ambitious.

Bicycle Action Plan

A bicycle action plan formulates the concrete actions that must be implemented in order to achieve the bicycle strategy’s goals and objectives. Actions and initiatives are described and prioritized, including when the actions will take place and who is responsible. The Bicycle Action Plan can also contain budget considerations, but not necessarily.

A bicycle action plan is an important instrument for politicians and the administration when it comes to municipal budget negotiations since what the bicycle action plan provides is precisely a prioritized list of concrete actions aimed at supporting and complying with the politically approved objectives.

Cross-disciplinary collaboration on the bicycle action plan in Randers
The municipality of Randers was interested in putting cycling on the agenda in the whole municipality. The idea was to create networks and ownership of the common cause across the municipal organization and across professional boundaries. Drawing up the bicycle action plan for Nordic Cycle Cities inspired Randers to establish a cross-disciplinary internal working group.

Part of the project was to develop a process plan for drawing up the bicycle action plan. Like the bicycle strategy process plan, it is based on a high degree of citizen and stakeholder involvement. The process plan consists of the following phases:

1. User needs analysis
2. Internal working group workshop and reference group workshop
3. Draw up a catalogue of ideas
4. Internal workshop to prioritize initiatives
5. Draft a proposal for the bicycle action plan
6. Hearing
7. Approval of the bicycle action plan

For further information and to download the process plan please visit: www.nordiskecykelbyer.dk

”Preparing the bicycle action plan helped us to think in completely new ways in Tranemo. We see the whole picture now, not just the infrastructure. By drawing up a bicycle action plan that solidly documents the need for cycle tracks we got SEK 3 million from the state to establish cycle tracks along state roads. Without a solid foundation like the bicycle action plan it’s very unlikely that we would have got so much funding so fast.

Lars Vesterlund, second deputy director, municipal administration, Tranemo Municipality

In addition to the Technical and Environmental administration’s own sections (Planning, Nature and the Environment, Roads and Transport), the working group consisted of representatives of the administrations for Health, Schools, Culture and Leisure, as well as the cross administrative unit Business and Development. The cross collaboration helped extend the scope of cycling promotion; the focus was no longer on merely drawing up cycle track plans, but on engaging more citizens in cycling.

Reaping the fruits of cross disciplinary collaboration
From the outset there was a common interest in Randers in promoting bicycle transport and a general will to ensure that this was solidly anchored in the community. A great

deal of time and energy was invested in the process of drawing up the plan. In the early phases of the collaboration with the other Nordic cycle cities, Randers was already developing a bicycle path plan; the internal working group followed this up with a more holistic bicycle action plan focusing on bicycle transport based on a cross disciplinary approach. This meant, for example, that promotional campaigns and health promoting initiatives at schools and day care centres were written into the bicycle action plan. The bicycle action plan was thus much more than a bicycle path plan which would have solely focused on extending and improving the bicycle path network. Instead, the focus of the Bicycle Strategy and Action Plan was “to encourage more citizens to move more”.

The meticulous work involved in establishing the working group paid off. Roads and Transport is no longer the only project manager for cycling initiatives. For example, the Danish Cyclists’ Federation approached Roads and Transport with an offer to train day care teachers for the new mobile bicycle playground. At the time Roads and Transport didn’t have the capacity to manage the project, but all it took was a phone call to the contact person in the health administration for them to embrace the idea instead.



Photo: Varberg Municipality

The “Unmixed Benefits” Campaign in Varberg
In Varberg, working with the bicycle strategy and action plan resulted in one comprehensive initiative: the “Unmixed Benefits” (Bare Fördelar) campaign. Project manager Annie Friberg confirms that working systematically has given continuity to the city’s cycling initiatives: “The assessment showed that we were working with a number of different projects, but there was no common thread, so we decided to focus on cycling so as to try and build up something lasting requiring continuity.”

The campaign focuses on the unmixed benefits of being a cyclist. The hub is the homepage www.barafordelar.se where all Varberg cycling information is gathered. Here cyclists can download a mobile application to challenge themselves and their friends to cycle more by recording each kilometre they cycle and comparing results. The app is linked to social media such as

Facebook and Twitter. There’s a bicycle journey planner on the homepage as well, making it easy to combine cycling with other transport modes.



”Silkeborg will not stop giving priority to cycling and road safety just because the project has ended; cycling is in focus now, in the committee and in the organization.

Frank Borch-Olsen, chairman, Roads and Transport Committee, Silkeborg Municipality.



Photo: Randers Municipality

Children on Bikes

Platform for discussion and exchange of experience

“Children on bikes” was an obvious focus area for Nordic Cycle Cities since unfortunately the trend in all three Nordic countries is that fewer and fewer children are learning how to deal with traffic. This is a major concern since experience shows that good cycling habits developed in childhood continue into adult life.

The working group’s first step was to conduct a survey of the municipality’s campaigns targeting children and cycling and to study the physical measures established for school children. In addition to their own experience, the working group drew on knowledge and practical

examples targeting children available on EU databases and websites.

One concrete result of the working group’s efforts was that in May 2009 studies were conducted of bicycle parking facilities and bicycle use at three schools in each local area. In addition to giving an accurate picture of cycling schoolchildren the studies were used to measure the effect of concrete initiatives.

Focus areas

The working group decided at an early stage to focus on two specific areas:

- School children’s transport to and from school
- Bicycle games for toddlers and children

Good cycling habits are like a game

Inspired by the Danish Cyclists’ Federation’s book Cykellege (“Cycling Games”), the working group focused on ways of introducing cycling skills into the child’s daily life through play, in collaboration with parents, schools and day care centres, and at events.

In Randers the focus was on cycling games; citizen-targeted events were arranged offering cycling games for children such as an obstacle course for 2-4 year olds on balance bikes or a manoeuvring course for older children. The city of Randers also trained a corps of cycling game instructors whose job is to visit dif-

“Our collaboration in the working group was a source of inspiration to everyone who participated, and was of great value when we were planning the campaigns. It provided a platform for our discussions that I think we all benefited from. For me personally, being part of the working group really opened my eyes to campaigns targeting children. We have very few such platforms (if any) in our own community, which is why I feel that our meetings in the working group were so exciting and professionally rewarding. Ole Jakob Hansen, project manager, Nordic Cycle Cities, Sandefjord.

ferent day care centres and play cycling games with the children.

Before Nordic Cycle Cities, balance bikes were an unknown concept to Swedish and Norwegian traffic planners. The Danish municipalities had excellent experience arranging balance bike events for toddlers, which gave other municipalities, including Mariestad, the idea of doing the same.

“I had never heard of balance bikes for toddlers before, and it was a real revelation to see the good experience Denmark had teaching children to cycle on balance bikes, by playing. We found it very inspiring and bought a number of balance bikes through Nordic Cycle Cities, which we lend out to day care centres, and we’ve organized other activities with them as well.” Eva Berdenius, project manager, Nordic Cycle Cities, Mariestad Municipality.

Campaign concept: All-Green School Route

The working group developed a school route campaign that was carried out in Sandefjord and Svenljunga in 2010 and 2011. The concept aimed at motivating school children to cycle to school by placing a “green” sticker on the classroom bulletin board whenever a child used green, or environmentally friendly, transport. The students competed both internally within the school and between the local

schools. Prizes were awarded each week.

Both campaigns resulted in a significant increase in the number of children that cycled to school, as well as an increased awareness among students, teachers and parents of the benefits of cycling.

Sandefjord project manager Ole Jakob Hansen has this to say about the effect of All-Green School Routes: “The figures speak for themselves. 1000 out of 3500 students in Sandefjord participated in the campaign in 2011. A great many classes achieved almost 100%

“green days”, which means that virtually everyone cycled, walked or took the bus to school. Since only children with a long school route would take the bus, the majority of the students either cycled or walked. We got a lot of positive feedback during the campaign, and the schools noted that there was less traffic chaos in the morning.”

Several members of the working group were so enthusiastic about the Svenljunga and Sandefjord results that they are planning on implementing similar measures in their own communities in the future.



Cycling to Work



Photo: Kristiansand Municipality

The bicycle commuting potential

Most of us never question the way we travel to and from work. However, our choice of transport mode significantly affects health, the economy, the environment, road congestion and the family. Furthermore, our choice of transport mode to and from work often determines our transport habits in relation to other activities and errands.

It is therefore simply common sense to focus on bicycle commuting as a means of promoting the cycling modal share. Furthermore, there is a great potential here since a large percentage of the workforce in Denmark, Norway and Sweden have less than 5 km to work, and thereby lie within the optimal radius for cycling to work.

The Cycling to Work working group conducted joint studies of the potential for and obstacles to getting car users to switch to cycling to and from work.

Campaigns: Best practice and local adaptation

The working group studied different campaigns targeting workplaces so

as to learn from the experience of others. One of their sources of inspiration was the Danish “We bike to work” campaign run by the Danish Cyclists’ Federation, which was then adapted to conditions in Sweden and Norway. (The Danish cycle cities simply signed up for the Danish campaign.)

Project Nordic Cycle Cities makes its mark

The idea of providing attractive facilities for staff members who cycle to work was an integral part of the construction plans of Viborg’s new town hall from the outset; the town hall is the workplace of 900 municipal employees. The town hall was inaugurated in September 2011 and has 205 covered bicycle parking spaces in front of the town hall and 32 bicycle parking spaces in the basement. There are also changing rooms with showering facilities and lockers for cycling staff.

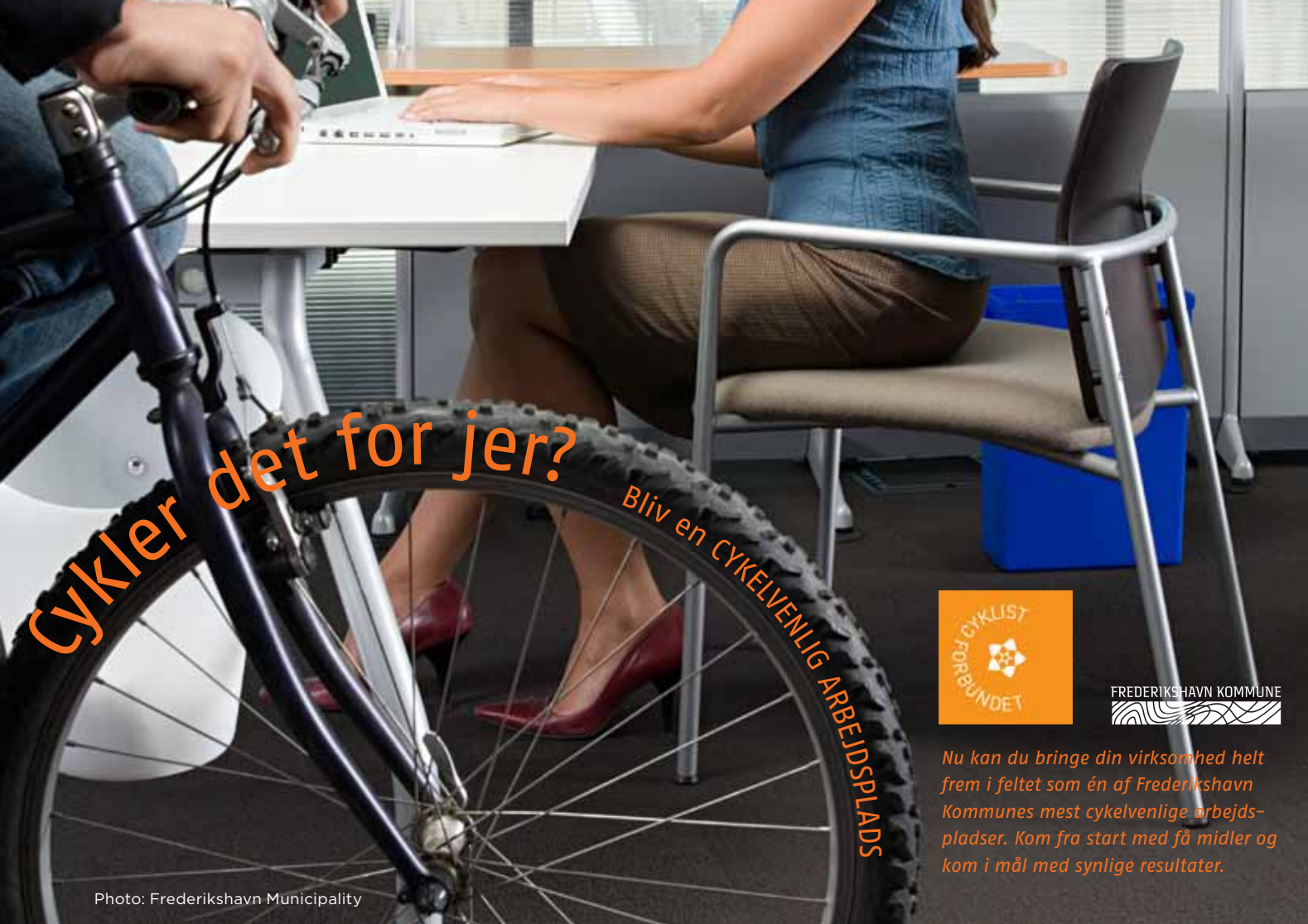


Photo: Frederikshavn Municipality

In this brochure the municipality of Frederikshavn urges large companies in the area to become a certified BICYCLE FRIENDLY WORKPLACE. This means that the company carries out a study of staff transport to and from work and then receives a concrete plan for establishing customized bicycle parking, bicycle repair, and showering and changing facilities, and for arranging company bikes and cycling promotion campaigns.

In addition, several municipalities, including Mölndal in Sweden, further developed the Danish concept of “certified bicycle friendly workplaces”.

Interregional collaboration

The interregional collaboration was extremely productive since there was a good deal of variation in the working group’s campaign experience. For some of the participants the concept of bicycle commuting was completely new. Others either had some experience implementing existing national campaigns or had developed their own cycling promotion campaign from scratch.

Mölndal. Corporate cycling motivator

Mölndal’s most recent travel habit survey showed that only 10% of all trips took place by bicycle. An obvi-

ous focus area was to develop cycling promotion campaigns targeting the city’s many large companies so as to encourage corporate staff to cycle to work.

10 Mölndal workplaces followed the city’s suggestion to create a network focusing on encouraging more commuters to cycle to work. Each of the 10 companies appointed a cycling motivator whose primary function is to motivate and encourage other staff members to leave their cars at home and jump on their bikes.

Read more about the cycling motivator at Astra Zeneca on page 16



Photos: Mölndals Stad

Astra Zeneca’s Cycling Motivator

The biopharmaceutical company Astra Zeneca (2,300 employees) appointed senior research scientist Andrea Ahnmark cycling motivator, and thereby contact person and liaison officer with the local authority. She has this to say about the collaboration:

“Astra Zeneca was already working on motivating staff to use sustainable transport modes to get to work. But the collaboration with the city of Mölndal initiated through Nordic Cycle Cities put greater focus on cycling to work.”

The 10 companies’ cycling motivators meet 3 or 4 times a year to exchange experiences and coordinate future activities with the city’s project manager. The city’s role is to support the cycling motivators in their promotional efforts.

Questionnaire and bicycle check-up

Each of the 10 firms had their staff fill out a questionnaire on what could motivate them to cycle to work, and carried out an analysis of the workplace’s physical cycling facilities; this provided the basis for formulating objectives in relation to cycling personnel.

At Astra Zeneca the result was that the showering and changing facilities were upgraded and expanded. The company already offered their

cycling staff covered bicycle parking facilities and the use of bike pumps. In addition, the company has an arrangement with the local bike shop to come once a week so the staff can have their bicycles repaired. The bicycle repairman repairs the bicycles at his workshop and returns them before 4 p.m. The staff only have to pay for repairs; the company pays for transporting the bicycles and gives the bike shop a supplement to make the offer attractive. A bicycle repair kit for minor repairs is available at the reception desk.

Nordic Cycle Cities also helped the company arrange a number of events and campaigns focusing on the benefits of cycling. Safety equipment was distributed to cycling staff, including reflectors, safety vests and bike lights, and all staff members received a cycle map. This increased awareness of the benefits of cycling, and the result was that more people were motivated to cycle to work. Employees also signed up for the annual “Cykelutmaning” where bike teams compete to see who can cycle the highest number of kilometres within a given time period.

Mölndal got the idea for the initiative through its collaboration in the Cycling to Work working group. Mölndal project manager Malin Månsson praises the working group’s participants for motivating each other and testing out their ideas on their Nordic colleagues.

“In the working group we got concrete proposals for initiatives that we can carry out. We got the idea for the Bicycle Friendly Workplace that we’re working on now from an initiative carried out by Frederikshavn and others. Mölndal is a city with a lot of large companies, and we’re already working actively on sustainable travel so we think that the bicycle friendly workplace concept will be useful here. The professional feedback we got from the project was unique.”

Serving Cyclists Better

All the Nordic cycle cities put a good deal of effort into “spoiling” cyclists, so as to make cycling more attractive. First of all, urban spaces should be better organized to suit cyclist needs. This involves pleasant, centrally located bicycle parking facilities, well maintained cycle tracks, and effective cycle route signage. Secondly, the option of choosing cycling as a transport mode should be made visible to everyone, and cyclists should be rewarded for their healthy, green choice by being provided with bicycle friendly amenities such as drinking fountains, bike pumps, and cyclist counters in the urban environment.



The Varberg App
Varberg developed a mobile application based on Google Maps to motivate young road users to walk and cycle more. Users can calculate their own cycle routes and see how much CO2 they save and how many calories they burn. The app is linked to the social media Facebook and Twitter so users can compare their performance and compete with their friends. In addition to being a fun gimmick for young cyclists, the data record of the cycle routes provides the city with valuable information for prioritizing new cycle tracks and maintaining existing ones.

The EU regional development fund Interreg IVA Kattegat- Skagerrak Region subsidized a number of bicycle friendly amenities for Project Nordic Cycle Cities.

Count stations	16
Cyclist counters	2
Signs	176
Company bikes	47
Bike stands	544
Drinking fountains	7
Bike pumps	7
Bicycle trailers	6
Information signs	12
Electronic warning signs	1



In Randers flat tires and thirsty cyclists belong to the past
Drinking fountains and bike pumps at the bus terminal and the Town Hall cater to Randers cyclists, providing them with water and air for their journey.
Photo: Randers Municipality



Bicycle signage in Kristiansand
Kristiansand had 20 cycle route signs financed through Nordic Cycle Cities. An entire signage plan was drawn up and the city is now at work signposting cycle routes in and around Kristiansand.

Tourist cycle map in Mariestad.
The municipality of Mariestad attracts many tourists and is eager for them to have a good experience, including cycling. Mariestad published a cycle map showing cycle routes and paths, and offering suggestions for cycling excursions and other activities. On the back of the map tourists can read about cycling ethics and showing consideration to other road users.



Security and Safety

The working group on security and safety

Universally, cyclists throughout the Nordic countries want to be able to transport themselves safely and securely in traffic. However, Nordic traffic regulations and legislation do not provide for this. For this reason the Security and Safety working group focused on exchanging experiences and examining ways to make cycling convenient, safe and secure. One of the working group's activities was to conduct a systematic study of local experience, which provided the basis for designing campaigns aimed at encouraging the use of bike lights, reflectors and helmets.

On the average, 50% of cyclists in the Nordic Cycle Cities ALWAYS or OFTEN use a helmet.

Mariestad: Be considerate of each other!

Allowing cyclists and pedestrians to share a path presents a challenge. Neither pedestrians nor cyclists are benefited if both road user groups feel insecure and inconvenienced by the other. Mariestad project manager Eva Berdenius was made aware of this during the working group; the city then published a leaflet focusing on ethics and mutual consideration among road users.

In Mariestad only 31% feel safe in traffic. But that doesn't mean cyclists wear a helmet since only 37% always or often wear a helmet.

The leaflet explains in clear and simple language what considerate road user behaviour involves.

Cycling tourism is a major focus area in Mariestad, and there are always many "new" cyclists on the paths so it makes sense to inform tourists of good cycling ethics and the need to show consideration. The leaflet is distributed at the tourist office, bicycle rental shops, the library, and is also printed on the back of the city's cycle map.

66% feel "secure" or "very secure" in traffic (in relation to assault, theft, etc.)



Nordic Cycle Cities distributes reflectors at schools and workplaces

The working group was responsible for purchasing uniform Nordic Cycle City spoke-mounted reflectors. The reflectors were distributed at schools and workplaces during targeted campaigns, and were also handed out to passing cyclists on Nordic Bicycle Day and to interested citizens at information meetings and bicycle days and events.



On average, 80% of cyclists in the Nordic Cycle Cities use a bike light in the dark.

Rewards rather than fines

Several Nordic Cycle Cities carried out "light in the dark" campaigns. The basic concept is that the police stop cyclists riding without bicycle lights. Instead of being fined, however, the cyclist is handed a bicycle light so as not to have to ride illegally, and dangerously, for the remainder of the journey. The campaign is a good example of the "carrot is better than the whip" principle, in other words, people are motivated to change their behaviour by information and coaxing rather than wagging an admonishing finger.

Photo: Kristiansand Municipality

In Frederikshavn only 24% wear a helmet. On the other hand, the citizens of Frederikshavn are the ones that feel safest in traffic (64%).



The working group gave us a much better understanding of different types of cycling solutions: designated cycling areas, dual use pedestrian/ cycle paths, cycle tracks, etc., and we learned how the different solutions actually affect cyclist safety. Our eyes were opened to cycling legislation and traffic regulations in the other countries, especially Denmark, where traffic regulations make it easier to be a cyclist than in Norway. In the long run increased awareness and knowledge of such issues and the different ways of addressing them can help change road rules and legislation. It's a difficult area to work with though since of course we have to take the national legislation into account.

Siri Gilbert, project manager and consultant for the Safety and Security working group, Kristiansand.

Nordic Bicycle Day



” We wanted to draw attention to cyclists last year on Nordic Bicycle Day so we placed cyclists with messages at 7 roundabouts, and we lined up cheerleaders along 3 major commuting sections. The whole thing was highly visible and came as a surprise. A number of the cyclists that I talked to said it felt good to be appreciated. Malin Månsson, municipality of Mölndal.

Spoiling and motivating cyclists in the whole North
The 11 Nordic cycle cities decided to draw attention to the concerted Nordic Cycle Cities initiatives by organizing a joint event that would motivate more citizens to cycle. April 21, 2010 was selected as joint NORDIC BICYCLE DAY.

Each of the 11 Nordic cycle cities planned activities focusing on the benefits of cycling. The activities ranged broadly, including dialogues with citizens at the local market, events and bicycle shows in the streets, cheerleaders along the major cycle tracks, and competitions to see who could cycle the highest number of kilometres.

Cheerleaders and living signs
In Mölndal cyclists were celebrated by lining up cheerleaders at the three main cycle approaches to the city.

In addition, living signs at roundabouts informed other road users of the benefits of cycling: cyclists posed

with their bicycles next to large signs giving good reasons to cycle.

Later in the afternoon the city offered free bicycle services and demonstrated bicycle products.

Cycling competition between Svenljunga and Tranemo
Svenljunga and Tranemo are neighbouring communities; they work in close collaboration to promote cycling in their areas. One of the projects they're working on is to establish a joint cycle track on the disused railway section between the cities to enable cyclists to go from one town to the other without being disturbed, completely segregated from other traffic.

Nordic Bicycle Day was the obvious choice for kick starting a competition between the two communities to see who could cycle the highest number of kilometres within a given time period. 50 citizen volunteers from each city received a cycle computer to record the number of kilometres they cycled in the period

between April 22 and September 12. The target group consisted primarily of cyclists who felt they were up to cycling to work or in other situations where they would normally have driven.

Tranemo won the competition, beating Svenljunga by 19,000 km, the Tranemo participants having ridden 79,000 km and the Svenljunga participants 60,000. If all those bicycle trips replaced a car trip, the participants taken as a whole saved the environment 20 tons of CO2.

Bike party and activities at Hjultorvet in Viborg.
The city of Viborg devoted Nordic Bicycle Day to fun games and activities catering to cyclists. There was a Bike Trial demonstration, and the Knabercyklisterne cycle club rode through the streets on a special bike designed for 10 riders; many citizens accepted their invitation to ride along. Cyclists were spoiled further and given bike pumps, puncture repair kits, and reflectors.



Press Cuttings

Ever since Project Nordic Cycle Cities was initiated in the spring of 2009, the partners continually kept citizens and the press informed of the many different activities that were being arranged. This generated a great deal of media interest, resulting in hundreds of articles in local and national media, a few examples of which can be seen below:



Summing Up

Project Nordic Cycle Cities ran for three years and created a solid foundation for promoting bicycle transport in the 11 communities for many years to come.

The project was based on a three pronged strategy to:

- Ensure that cycling promotion was solidly anchored in the political and municipal organization
- Carry out activities targeting citizens (promotional campaigns, events, information)
- Invest in a bicycle friendly urban environment

The observations and practical examples set forth in this publication show that the 11 communities were successful in creating political and organizational commitment to and ownership of cycling promotion.

The concrete results of Nordic Cycle Cities are:

- 11 Bicycle Accounts 2009
- 11 Bicycle Strategies
- 11 Bicycle Action Plans
- 11 Bicycle Accounts 2010

The bicycle strategies and action plans ensure that the 11 communities will make cycling a priority for many years to come.

Another main element of the project was to develop process plans for drawing up bicycle strategy and action plans, and bicycle accounts. The process plans were developed, tested, and re-assessed throughout the project and are now available to other Nordic communities on the project's homepage.

In addition, all 11 communities developed campaigns, events and information materials aimed at catering to existing cyclists and motivating more citizens, young and old, to cycle.

The Nordic cycle cities further focused on making cyclists visible in the urban environment and the funds the project received from the Interreg IVA program were used to establish bicycle friendly amenities including 544 bicycle stands, 176 signs, 47 company bikes and 16 count stations, as well as drinking fountains, bicycle pumps, bicycle trailers and information signs.

The local media showed great interest in the project and covered all the events and activities that were arranged for citizens and politicians.



Photo: Cycling Embassy of Denmark



Nordic Cycle Cities was co-financed by:

