



**Title:**

Nordic cycle cities, Regional cooperation – local solutions

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During the past year 11 Nordic municipalities (Frederikshavn, Viborg, Silkeborg and Randers from Denmark, Kristiansand and Sandefjord from Norway and Varberg, Mölndal, Svenljunga, Mariestad and Tranemo from Sweden) have worked together to increase the modal split of cycling. The goal is to reduce the number of short car trips and thus reduce CO2 emissions from transportation and secure a healthier lifestyle among the citizens.

The 11 municipalities are very different geographical, topographical and demographical and have very different experiences with promoting cycling. The experiences depend among other things of national traditions, cycle traffic legislation, local political focus and differences in organization and resources. But the 11 municipalities also have faces the same challenges:

- Increasing car traffic
- CO2-emissions from the traffic
- Ad hoc planning in cycle traffic
- The need to prioritize bicycle traffic politically and organisatorically

The 11 municipalities are working together to develop measures to increase bicycle traffic. Every partner is thus responsible for adapting the different measures to their local context. That way the partners share knowledge, build competences and get to implement new solutions that work in their local context. The project partners meet face to face at nine two days project meetings and go on two study trips. Between meetings they communicate through e-mail and telephone.

International experience shows that political ownership, a formal organization, documentation and continuous evaluation, benchmarking and method and competence building is essential for increasing bicycle traffic. Thus every partner has to draw up a local bicycle policy and action plan, implement 2-3 different actions from the plan and monitor the development in the bicycle traffic through 2 bicycle accounts. It is an essential part of the project that both politicians and users are included in all the processes.

Both Danish and international experiences also show that the highest effects are obtained, when cycling is approached systematic and goal oriented. Thus Nordic Cycle Cities work according to a two stringed strategy, where the partners have both to develop the local infrastructure and promote cycling through campaigns, dialogue and communication. The main target groups are children and commuters and safety is a primary focus area.

**Cycling the Nordic Way**

At the end of the project period a concept for local and regional cycling promotion will be developed based upon the experiences from the project. The concept will be known as “The Nordic Way”. The concept will consist of a process plan and a political statement which obligates the signers to develop a cycling strategy, action plan and cycling account with a high level of both politician and user involvement, ongoing exchange of experiences and joint development of methods and obligatory benchmarking between the future Nordic signers.

Nordic Cycle Cities runs until the end of 2011 and is co-financed by Interreg IV A: The Kattegat-Skagerak-program.