

Attractive to walk for all - A national strategy for more walking in the case of Norway

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Abstract.

Founded in the understanding that walking is probably the best sustainable mode of transport for short distance trips in urban areas, the Norwegian Ministry of Transport in its guidelines for the National Transport Plan for 2014 -2023 authorised The Norwegian Public Road Administration (NPRA) to develop a national strategy for pedestrians or walking. The result has been the so called National Walking Strategy for Norway. Universal design is a key tool in this strategy.

Keywords.

National walking strategy. Policy. Universal design. Design of physical environment. Service and maintenance. Walking culture. Walkability.

Introduction

The Norwegian Public Roads Administration (NPRA) was commissioned by the Norwegian Government through the previous National Transport Plan to produce a National Walking Strategy. All the regions of the NPRA have been involved in this work, along with representatives from the Directorate of Health and some selected towns and county authorities. The final strategy was presented to the government together with the transport agencies' proposals for the National Transport Plan 2014 – 2017.

Universal design is a key tool in this strategy, and this commitment to universal design and more walking is a win-win situation. This commitment is of course important with regard to participation and inclusion, but also in a broader context to meet huge challenges regarding public health and making more sustainable cities and surroundings.

Two main objectives

The strategy has two main objectives:

- Walking should appeal to everyone.

This objective implies that all population groups should find walking appealing, and that it is made easier for them to walk more on a daily basis. Universal design is described as a principle for designing the physical environment.

- More people should walk more.

This objective implies that more of the total journeys made by the inhabitants should be made on foot, and that all population groups should walk more on a daily basis.

The development of the walking strategy has been based on a vision that "It should be attractive to walk for all" and the main areas it addresses are 1) requirements for cooperation between different institutional actors, 2) design of the physical environment, 3) demand for service and maintenance, 4) better interaction in traffic, 5) how to promote a walking culture, and 6) need for more research and better planning tools. Long-term objectives, targets for the period 2014-2023, and strategies to achieve these targets within the six main areas have been identified.

The National walking strategy will now be followed up with local strategies in municipalities in Norway. Participation from different groups in the population is important in this work.

The walking strategy emphasizes a coherent network for pedestrians in towns and cities. The main network should be accessible for all. There may be an underlying network with shortcuts and other solutions.

The poster will present the goals and themes in the National walking strategy and give an overview of the work with universal design in the Norwegian transport system. The poster will focus on the theme *physical environment* where universal design is seen as a concept for design and one of the qualities in the environment.. Suggestion for how we could build an infrastructure with a high level of accessibility, are based on the NPRA standards and guidelines. Universal design is integrated in those guidelines.

References

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