Accessible footpaths in Telemark

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County Governor of Telemark
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Universal Design in the built environment
Organization

• Cooperation in Telemark since 2012:

1. The County Council
2. The County Governor
3. The Road Administration
4. The Trekking Association
5. All the 18 municipalities

An interdisciplinary project.
«Where can I walk?»

- A survey in all 18 municipalities, Telemark, 2012.

- Question:
  Where can persons - with and without disability - go for a walk?

In leisure and daily life.
The essence of the project (1)

- Stimulate all inhabitants to be in physical activity in everyday life
- The public sector is important in health promotion
- Walking is a good Norwegian tradition
- Norway is «hilly and uneven»
The essence of the project (2)

- Many footpaths with universal design is the solution
- Regional authorities cooperate with the municipalities
- Challenge: - the infrastructure in villages and towns are planned and built
- But - together we can make some good results!
Footpaths – a topic with innovation

• Densely populated areas have roads for cars and small paths for walking

• The lack of footpaths for all make life difficult

• «New eyes» and common will create new possibilities
Impact on local development

• All 18 municipalities in Telemark work with accessible footpaths

• 12 of 18 have built footpaths for all; the others are planning

• Many disciplines participate on local and regional level

• Different landscape – different paths
Impact of accessible footpaths

- Increase social meetings, outdoor life, nature experience, physical condition and health for all in a climate-friendly way

- Inspire thinking Universal Design in other topics and arenas

- Former inactive persons get new possibilities and healthy habits
The success factors

• The aim is not controversial
• Missing link in infrastructure
• Many interests and aspects
• Interdisciplinary work inspires
• Small costs, financial possibilities
• Endurance!
«Daily trips give meaning to my life»

«After the path came, I’m out every day. Getting inspiration from nature, fresh air, and from meeting other people. Those daily trips give meaning to my life». 

Anne Lise Dahl (79) Drangedal, Telemark
The next steps

- Continue regional cooperation
- Fulfill the local plans
- After the railroads; - footpaths?
- Focus on use, activity and recruiting
- Share experience

- Vision: - «All citizens in Telemark can go for a walk near their home»