

Active youth mobility

Climate-smart and health promoting mobility habits for children

Problem area

According to Agenda 2030 climate change is an urgent issue that we need to deal with through joint actions and we need to tackle them from multiple perspectives. In Sweden, as in many parts of the North Sea Region, the transport sector accounts for one third of the CO₂-emissions – these have proven hard to diminish. The majority of the transport emissions come from commuting to and from work and leisure activities.

Transportation is an area that requires great changes in how we behave and changing these patterns of behavior remains a challenge. It is important to that municipalities can assure preconditions for accessible and safe routes to and from schools. The habits of adults are created at an early age. Children that are used to activity and cycling is more likely to keep those habits as they grow older. It's easier to change the behavior of adults from car to bicycle if they used to cycle when they were young.

Swedish children are cycling less than a generation ago. The number of children between 7 and 14 years who cycle every day has reduced from 24 to 15 percent. In the age 15-24, the number decreased from 22 to 12 percent. In order to create sustainable mobility habits, there is a need for climate friendly and health promoting activities directed towards children.

Today, children are more likely to be overweight, and lack of daily activity contributes to the increased illness among young people. Pollution and poor air quality is also affecting the overall health and wellbeing of children in the long run. Increased physical activity has shown having positive effects on academic performance as well as improved mental and physical health. For instance, children who exercise frequently are less likely to experience depression and diseases linked to bone fragility. Teaching children to choose climate friendly, healthy transportation options might help them to make more sustainable choices as grown-ups.

The ability to cycle is also giving people increased access to the society and leisure activities. This is important from a socio-economic perspective.

Different groups in society have different preconditions for transportation – some have access to cars and some do not. Access to a bicycle and knowledge about cycling can equalize these differences. Increased independent mobility through cycling is giving children the opportunity to take part in activities in neighboring areas, facilitating integration in society and access to new knowledge.

Aim and objective

The aim of this project is to try different efforts to promote active school transport for children and investigate what efforts has the greatest effect on the target group.

Aspects that will need to be defined more precisely within the project are:

- What are the opportunities for cycling in the different target groups and how can we create equal opportunities for everyone to take part in society
- How to include children's needs in traffic- and spatial planning
- How to create better opportunities for active schools transport, enabling children to safely transport themselves to school
- How to increase knowledge and motivation about sustainable mobility habits and common sense in traffic among children as well as their parents and employees at the schools

Implementation

The participating schools will be offered a tool box with actions from the different working packages for them to choose what suites best for their specific school. The project will examine which activities are most suitable in the long-term perspective in order to reach the desired effects.

WP1: Administration and management

- Administration and project management
- Continuous research and evaluation of project activities

WP2: Strategic planning

Examine children's transport to and from school to come up with strategies to make them more sustainable

WP3: Behavioral change – Tool box

- Raise competence in theory and practice (e.g. family cycling course, cycling driver's license, activities directed towards the parents and school management)
- Behavioral change – Plan for continuity (e.g. gamification, wandering schoolbuses)
- Follow-up

WP4: Communication and dissemination

Communication and dissemination activities.

Target group

Pilot municipalities and pilot schools will be chosen in each region of the North Sea Region – these will be selected based on:

- *Urban area, larger rural area and smaller rural area*
- *Different socioeconomic areas*

Primary target group: Children aged 6-9 years and 10-12 years

Secondary target group: Parents, employees at the schools (Administration, teachers, student health), Spatial planners

Timetable for application

Interreg Programme North Sea Region

- *Deadline for sending in your interest to the project manager, 28th February 2019*
- *Expression of Interest, 8th April 2019*
- *Full Application autumn 2019*

Scope

An International project with 4-5 partners within the North Sea region. Project start 2020.

Partnership

Kronoberg County contributes with:

- The way of working with a “cycling tool box” were the participating actors chose from activities best suited for their school and needs.
- Nudging as a method for behavioral changing efforts regarding sustainable mobility.
- Competence in behavioral changing efforts.

What we are searching for the following partners:

- Regions and/or municipalities:
 - with a strong culture of cycling and experience in active mobility;
 - with schools that are interested to act as pilots in the project.
- Institutes or universities that can contribute with research and continuous evaluation
- Partners with expertise within communication and dissemination

For further information, please contact:

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