

Study tours 20 June 2007

Culture & Tourism

The Culture and Tourism study tour will focus on how infrastructure facilities like Sandefjord airport and Larvik ferry terminal have contributed to the rise of tourism in Vestfold and surrounding areas. The study tour will pass these two facilities, but will concentrate on the measures taken by Vestfold County Council to develop culture-based tourism in the county, including the development of the Vestfold Viking County concept. The tour will pass the important Gokstad site, where a Viking ship was found in the late 19th century, and Kaupang, where in recent years a Viking Age town has been excavated.

Further, the study tour will visit the UNESCO European Geopark site on Mølen, walk a part of the route from the NAVE NORTRAIL path and the NORTH SEA CYCLE ROUTE path

Innovation & Education

Students and teachers from Skien Videregående Skole (upper secondary education) present Young Enterprise. Young Enterprise aims teach business skills to students. Students are given the opportunity to run a company and to develop their business skills in co-operation with other students.

The main goal of Young Enterprise is to give young people:

- the opportunity to gain personal experience of how businesses operate
- an understanding of the role business plays in providing employment and creating prosperity
- the inspiration to improve their own prospects
- knowledge as to the importance of Norwegian competitiveness
- the inspiration and tools to learn and succeed through enterprise
- the opportunity to create links between education and business and industry

The representatives from the School will tell of the Schools experiences of the use of Young Enterprise as a learning methodology.

Sustainable Development

The river Numedalslågen is Norway's second longest river. From the western part of Hardangervidda – the highest mountain plateau in Europe – the river runs through the Numedalen valley to the town of Larvik. In the upper regions there are a number of hydroelectric power plants. Downstream from Hvitvingfoss, however, the river runs wild, constantly changing from quiet parts to rapids and waterfalls, through the natural and cultural landscape. This is the salmon-bearing stretch of the river.

Situated in one of the most spectacular sceneries of Lågendalen you find the Kjærra Waterfalls Park. The Park, covering areas on both sides of the river, derives its name from the famous Kjærra Waterfalls, where the river splits into two separate courses: the eastern falls and the western falls.

This area, designated as The Millennium Site of Lardal municipality, is now being developed into one of the more fascinating recreational areas of southern Norway. On the west bank,

land has been purchased and safeguarded for recreational purposes by Lardal municipality with financial aid from the Directorate of Nature Management. A separate foundation has been established for the purpose of developing the area with special emphasis on protecting the environment.

A new road and parking place has been built, greatly improving access for the public in general and for the handicapped in particular. This site has been nominated for national awards for recreational areas several times after having won the county awards.

On this part of the river – within the Park area – you will find the largest concentration of traditional salmon fishing equipment in Norway. Through centuries of experience, traps and nets of various shapes have been carefully adapted to the special conditions of the river with its waterfalls and currents.

Transport

The study tour on transport will mainly focus on air transport and sea-based transport - in the interface of tourism and transport. Torp Airport is the first stop on the tour. This airport is owned by regional and local authorities together with some private share owners and is enjoying a steady growth in the number of passengers. The airport has also become Norway's main base for low cost carriers such as Ryanair. The airport management will inform about the development concepts behind the success of Torp as a compact and modern airport. Then the tour continues to the ports of Sandefjord and Larvik. These ports are important hubs for both passenger and freight transport, and the tour will provide information about ferry lines to Sweden and Denmark, as well as about the organisation of intermodal sea-based freight transport. The last stop of the tour will be in the small town of Stavern with a visit to the port for leisure boats.

Maritime Resources and Fisheries Group

This years study tour will take place at Norwegian Maritime Academy (Havariverskolen) located at Borre. The theme of the tour is maritime training. We aim to bring together representatives from maritime training centres from many countries to discuss the possibility of creating a network of centers of excellence in Maritime Training and to develop an international standard in Marine Training.

We will have a presentation from the Norwegian Maritime Academy on the work they are doing with Cork Maritime College.

We will also have a representative from the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES) who will inform us about their joint initiative with the Regional Advisory Councils, to bring young fishermen to the ICES Annual Science Conference to gain a better understanding of fisheries science.

There may also be the possibility of going on board the NMA training vessels to see their methods of training.

It is hoped that if there is agreement about forming a Network that Interreg Funding may be sought to create the network and develop the training standard which could include an understanding of science.