

Newsletter – fourth meeting in Nesodden, Norway

26th March-1st April 2017



First day of the meeting in Norway

Everyone arrived in Norway on Sunday afternoon. Students had their first experience of the ferry ride from the centre of Oslo to the Nesodden peninsular before continuing to their host families to spend the evening. The teachers remained in Oslo, able to enjoy the unusually mild and sunny weather.

Monday 27th March

Today was a very exciting day. We got the opportunity to meet all the people from the different countries in the morning. We started at 08.15 in a classroom at Nesodden vgs, with a presentation about CITIES and later, all the pretasks from the different member countries. Norway started with a presentation about Steilene, some islands off the coast of Nesodden. They were followed by Germany who told us about neglected areas and potential in Rees. Later, the Netherlands talked about Amersfoort and three areas that have development potential. Poland came next with information about neglected areas and development in the city of Poznan and finally Spain made a presentation of their pretasks about Sa Como, Ibiza.

We had a break where we could talk to the others, and got divided into groups with one student from each country. We presented ourselves to each other and had a chance to talk to each other. As we would be in these groups for the rest of the week, it was good to have time to find out more about the others in the group.

The weather was lovely – warm and sunny. So, we ate lunch outside at 11.30, where we got baguettes and Bris, Norwegian sparkling water, from the school's cafeteria.

Our fieldtrip started at 12.00 and we walked to Tangenåsen for a presentation about Nesodden by the planning committee for the municipality's planning department. They talked about the different issues the municipality is facing, and what factors that have to be considered when planning an area. The informative presentation lasted for about an hour, and we then walked towards Tangen Brygge, the ferry terminal. We had a lot of time to look at the buildings on the way down, and visited

Hornstranda, one of the local beaches and bathing places near the ferry terminal. We watched the Color Line ferry from Denmark and relaxed in the sunshine. Later, we walked to the actual terminal and took pictures of the whole group. We saw the area which we are going to focus on when working on the group task towards the end of the week, and then took the bus home.

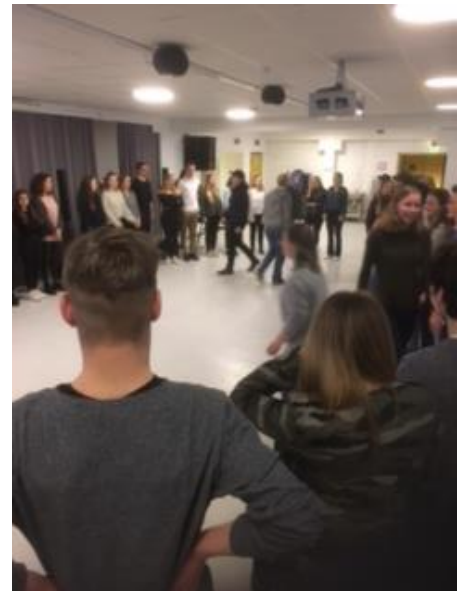
International Evening

We had the international evening which started at 18.15. Everybody brought something to eat. The Norwegians brought salmon, Poland brought sausages and many kinds of sweets, Spain brought bread, sweets and meat, and the Dutch brought stroop waffles and pancakes. Germany brought sausages and sauerkraut. There was plenty for everyone to eat.



There was Entertainment for everyone while they were eating. Nicolai Bo Fischer danced a spectacular Norwegian folk Dance, and students could try "Hallingkast" - when you have to try to kick a hat off a pole. Sabina and Kristin performed "Stay" and William and Jonathan Ho played a string duet. Nordre Nesodden skolekorps, the local school band, also marched in and played three traditional Norwegian marches.

We played a few games, "Zip, Zap, Boing", "Yellow Ball" and "Symphony" led by Jørgen Moltubak, one of the Norwegian teachers. Maya, one of the German teachers, taught us some salsa dancing and the rest of the night was just talking, dancing, laughing and continuing the task of getting to know each other better. Everybody had a great time before going home to their host families to relax before the early start the next day.



Tuesday 28th March

We started at the school at 8 am and did some work on the project "Erasmus +". Later we took the bus to the ferry terminal at Tangen Brygge to take the ferry into Oslo. We arrived in Oslo and met the teachers who had a later start today. The weather was sunny and warm, so it was a good day to spend outside. We first took the underground train to Grønland station which is in the eastern part of the city. The Dutch teachers noticed straight away how similar the Dutch and Norwegian languages are, as they could understand many of the signs in the underground.



Then, we walked to Akerselva, a river which flows through the whole city. Akerselva was the industrial center of Oslo from the 1840s to 1970s. Now the river is called "green lung of Oslo", as the water has been cleaned up (there are fish living in there), there are many paths for

hiking and cycling, and park areas where you can sit down and enjoy the sunshine. Next to the river there are a lot of old buildings. The oldest one is from the 17th century.

Furthermore, we saw a building which is called "Hausmania". It is a house for artists, and is very colourful. Many of the old factories have been turned into new uses for example like cafès and restaurants.



We walked from Grønland to Mathallen(foodhall), where we had lunch at 1o'clock.

Before lunch we met Ola Martinsen who works as a landscape architect for the Oslo "Bymiljøetaten", the Agency for City Environment. He explained what the area around Vulkan was used for before and the long process to make this former industrial area into a park. He talked about Nedre Foss Gård, which is an old house converted to a restaurant which sadly was

badly damaged by fire recently. He also explained how the municipality have planned so that people can access the river, as well as how they have focused on making the area accessible for all kinds of users. Part of Ola's talk took place with all the students sitting on steps facing the river. On one of the steps, an artist has created a mural showing the industrial history of the city.



After lunch we took the tram to "Vigelandsparken". "Vigelandsparken" is in the district of Frogner, so the park is also called "Frognerparken". The park is filled with sculptures of people and shows the circulations for each life stages. The most popular sculptures are "Sinnataggen" and "Monolitten". "Sinnataggen" is a sculpture of a male baby who is stamping and crying. "Monolitten" is a pillar which is about 17m high with 121 people in it. The sculptor Gustav Vigeland designed all 212 sculptures in the park, although he had help to make them. His idea of showing different activities like walking, dancing, love and death imparts emotions to the visitors. Finally, everyone was allowed to walk around in the park and visit Oslo again. We went to the castle, the parliament and the university.

Wednesday 25. January

During our 4th day in Norway we visited its capital city - Oslo. At 10 we were finally there, and could meet our guide, who took us for a walk around Fjordbyen. We had a chance to see Akershus fortress - a medieval castle that was built to protect Oslo. It was king Christian IV of Denmark who had the castle modernised and converted into a Renaissance castle and royal residence.



Then we visited a place broadly described in every Norwegian guidebook - 'The Bank Square'. Also called Bankplassen, it's a square in the neighbourhood Kvadraturen in Oslo, where the Norges Bank and Engebret Cafe - a restaurant which is well-known for the famous artists who have frequently visited it, such as Henrik Ibsen and Edvard Munch. Our guide talked about the purpose of the buildings that were there and how some of them have been repurposed over the years. She also showed us how some parts of the centre were from different eras. This was very interesting because it showed us that you don't need to build new things in order to make a space useful again.

Around noon we've entered the Oslo Opera House - the home of the Norwegian National Opera and Ballet. The group was split in two smaller groups and we each went through the building. Everyone was astonished by the beauty of this building - Tarald Lundevall, the man behind the architecture of the Opera, most certainly did a remarkable job.

The tour included an explanation of the choices that were made in relation to the architecture and the decoration. For example, the wood structure of the building wasn't made by woodworkers, but by boatbuilders because they're used to working with big structures. We were given an opportunity to go behind the scenes and find out more about the work of the opera's employees. We even attended a



rehearsal of one of the shows which will soon be officially performed.

After a lunch break we were walking along the Havnepromenaden, a walkway in the district of Sørenga, guided by Jenny Ann Flø from Bymiljøetaten, the Agency of City Environment. She talked to us about a project she is involved with which involved using materials that could be reused in other places than Oslo. This was also very interesting because it taught us about durability of materials. In general, we thought the trip to Oslo was very educational and we picked up a lot of things to use in our own project. Having successfully caught a boat (which was not that obvious), we got back to our host families in Nesodden around 16.

Thursday 29th March



Today was a long day - we had a trip to Oslo and then, finally, we started to work on our projects.

We started the day by taking the ferry to Oslo in order to meet Yngve Hegrenes – an architect responsible for management of transformation processes working in the Oslo municipality. Although we were very excited for the trip, unfortunately, the weather greeted us with cold wind and rain which made the walk a little more tiring.

We met our guide in the Oslo harbour and then we followed him to Studentertunden. On the way we discussed the experience of a car-free area and how creating a framework of development of Oslo looks like. Then we admired the city layout around the Royal Palace inspired by the ideas of Enlightenment. It was a very inspiring and thought-provoking lesson, especially that we were able to hear a lot about how the architecture and space are tied to the history of the city and the whole Norwegian nation. We even had some time to walk around the area and experience the importance of harmony and order in city-planning.

Next, we walked around the Renaissance part of the city, where we were able to see the difference between the ideas behind city planning in the

1600s and 1850s. It was really interesting to discover what the reason behind the differences in the city areas is. We have also investigated the possible obstacles which may occur during the introduction of a car free area. How is the city going to manage the deliveries? How are the inhabitants of these zones going to commute? These are the problems that have to be faced by city planners.



Another thing that we learned is how the priorities change overtime and how the city planners have to adapt existing areas to new needs following the example of Eidsvolls Plass. The City Government wants to create a greener and warmer city with room for everyone. The life of the city shall be vibrant, the air cleaner and the arrangements for pedestrians and cyclists better. A centre without cars shall be easily accessible and make more room for life in the streets and pleasant meeting areas.

We finished the trip at Torggata, where we were introduced to the impact that different materials have on the overall climax of the area. We admired some elements of cityscape like pot plants and bike stops. Later, with the heavy rain to accompany us, we ran to the ferry, which took us back to Nesodden.

To finish off the day, inspired by the three trips to Oslo, we started working on our projects. We started drafting our plans for the area and made a framework for the next day.



In the evening we spent some time with our hosts, and some of us went to Oslo for the dinner and other fun activities (e.g.: bowling!).

Friday 30th March

Today was the Grand Finale of the project. It was an early start for the students, as they began working in their groups at 0800. We began with a run through of the task, that the each group was required to make a

presentation to show to the whole project group in the afternoon, and a brochure that summarised their ideas.

The students got to work quickly and the room was a hive of activity, with groups of students gathered around computers, translating their drawings and notes from yesterday into presentations and brochures. The creativity and digital skills of the students impressed us – one group even created a three-dimensional plan of their idea!

After three intensive hours of work and a short break, the students were ready to present their ideas. Each group made a short presentation of both products, and it was clear that they had given a lot of thought to the potential of the area around Tangen Brygge. It was also evident that the various visits to places in Oslo had inspired and informed the students as it was possible to see this in elements of the design. The students had thought particularly of transport, particularly related to the environment, with focus on cycling and public transport. In addition, they had addressed the needs of the local population, adding supermarkets to the area for people who commute through the ferry terminal every day, as well as a range of entertainment facilities. The teachers all agreed that we were very grateful this was not a competition as it would have been impossible to choose a winner amongst all the creative and forward-thinking ideas. We look forward to the reaction of Nesodden municipality when we present the ideas to them.

Now the project week was drawing to a close, so it was time to thank everyone for their participation and hand out certificates to them, before rounding off the official part of the week. Then students made their way to the school gymnasium where we took photographs and Agnethe Nohr, one of the Norwegian gym teachers, initiated some games to burn off some energy. Then it was time to say goodbye to the teachers and the school, before returning to the host families for the final evening in Norway. Groups of students met up after dinner to enjoy this last evening together.



Saturday 1st April

Today everyone returned home after an inspiring and educational week in Norway. The Spanish students had an early start, as their flight was at 9am. We met six very tired looking students at 5.30am to take the taxi to the airport! The other students were able to leave a little later on the ferry. Thank you all for a wonderful week.

For further details on the project, please visit the blog at:

<http://citiesinternationalproject.blogspot.no/>

Or the webpage at:

<http://goosemartin.wixsite.com/erasmuscities>