

Pilot in Gjøvik

Demand-Responsive
Transport to ensure
accessibility, availability
and reliability of rural
public transport

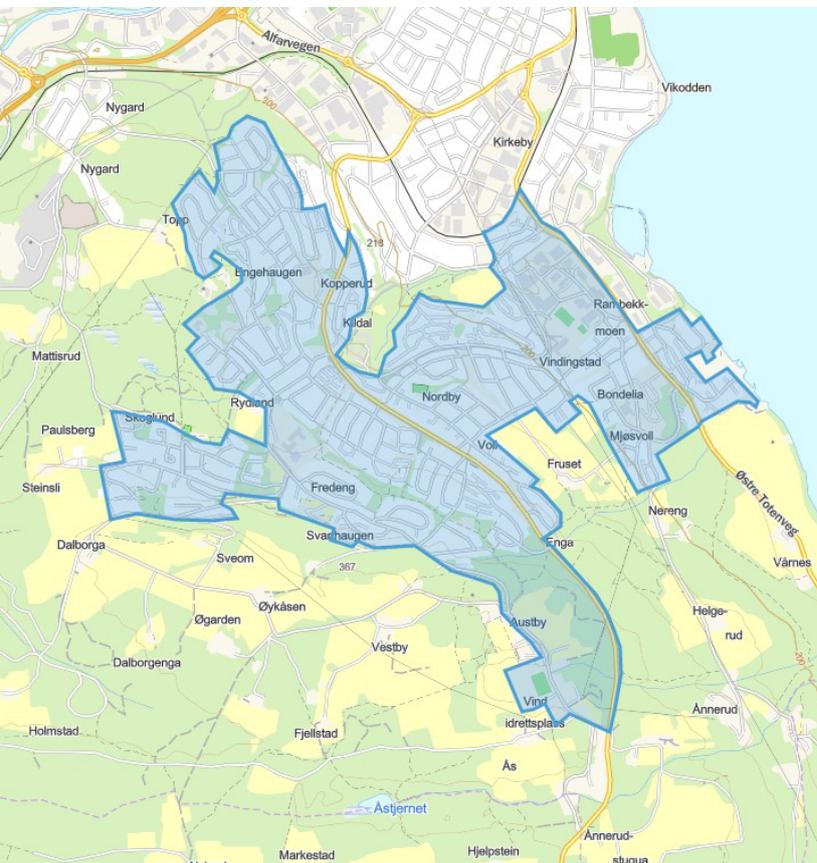


PILOT IN GJØVIK, NORWAY

Starting and ending date of pilot

16.08.2021 -16.12.2021

Map



Opening event in Gjøvik. Photo: Innlandstrafikk

SHORT INTRODUCTION TO THE PILOT

Innlandstrafikk has been seeking a dedicated economic partner for the RESPONSE project to build the framework for a demand-responsive transportation pilot.

The pilot service is driven in collaboration with a local authority, Gjøvik Kommune who has done a case study on the members (children/youth) of a local sports club and public transport in the specific area.

The pilot involves 2 sets of routes operated by minibus, which is operated on ordinary bus fares, allowing children and youth to travel to/from training by public transport. The service is booked from a webpage facilitated by Gjøvik commune.

Pilot audience

Children /youth attending sports practice

Aim of pilot

- Work up a framework for a DRT-service built on collaboration with a partner to be used elsewhere in the future.
- Acquire knowledge and experience about and test activity-based DRT (never been done by Innlandstrafikk before) with a youth target group.
- Acquire knowledge and experience about DRT-service run with ticket machines and ordinary bus fares.
- Acquire knowledge and experience about web booking on DRT.

Covid-19

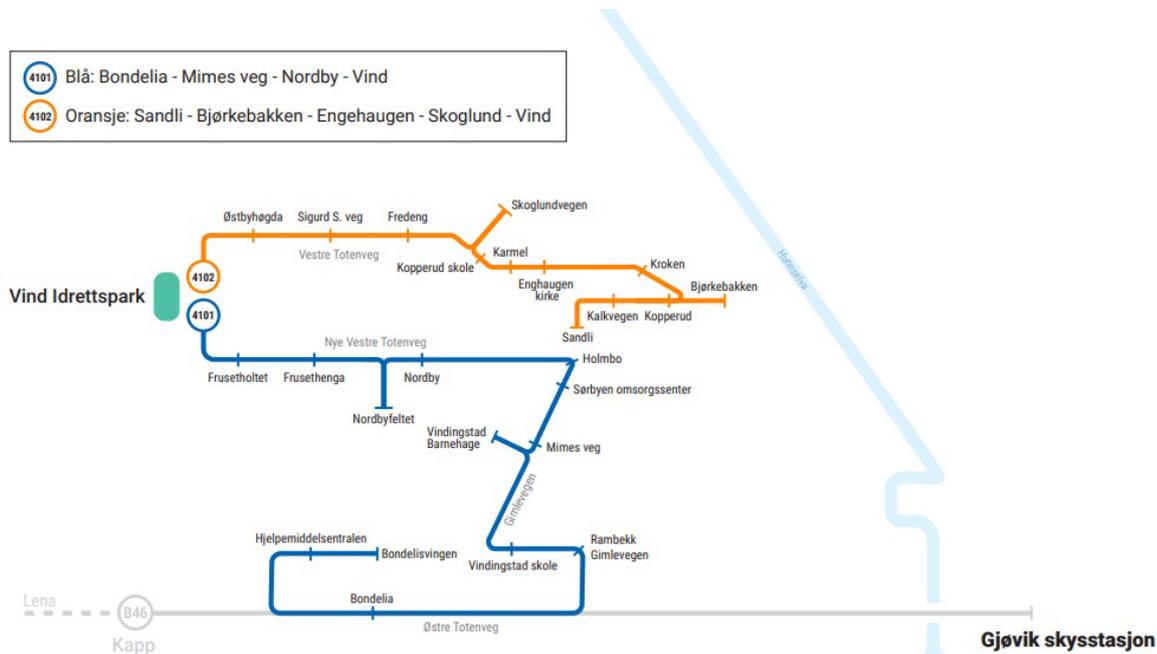
The pilot was postponed due to covid 19. Work on the framework was suspended in March / April 2020 in Norway, and the start of the pilot was further postponed due to the time of launch of a new service, originally planned at a time when people in Norway did not was to use NPT due to Covid 19. The pilot started in October 2020 but must be shut down after two weeks and was temporarily postponed to relaunch in August 2021. During the pilot period in 2021, we had several local outbreaks of Covid 19 in Gjøvik that affected the customer potential in some individual weeks during the pilot period.

EVALUATION

Organisation of the pilot

The pilot was built on a cooperation agreement with Gjøvik municipality, especially for this project and the tender we already had with Gjøvik Taxi, which operates the DRT routes in Gjøvik. The service was set up with two routes between the sports arena and the residential area in each direction in the sports club's catchment area.

These lines went more locally than the regular route would have offered. The timetables were optimized, and arrival and departure were timed with start and end times at the sports teams' universal one and a half hour training sessions on weekdays, which means that the routes could drive the children to one training, and a few minutes later pick up other children who have just finished their training and drive them home from training - before driving new children to training again.



The routes were set up in our "In house" planning tool to create ordinary timetables and exported to the national travel planner "EnTur". The timetables and travel planner showed customers to an online booking site to be able to book and cancel their own trips. The ordering page was directly linked to the carrier's planning system. The order deadline was set to at least one hour before departure. For the first time in Innland County, we used the same fares as on regular buses on a DRT service, which means that customers could use the same tickets (cards and apps) as they used on regular buses.

At the beginning, the pilot had some technical problems with the booking site, but when sorting that out, we had no problems with planning and booking. The ticketing worked well too, but we did have some minor difficulties reaching the data due to old hardware. However, this was also sorted out.

The routes were set up with one vehicle on each route, but the carrier was given the opportunity to optimize the use of the vehicles if the number of orders allowed it.

A landing page was built where travellers could find all relevant information. Timetables, route map tickets, booking informatics and all other relevant information about the service were gathered on one page. The service was mentioned in several local newspapers, and one of the vehicles and two ordinary buses was taped with advertising for the project to drive around the municipality as a living billboard.

Customer experience

The pilot received good feedback from the municipality and the administration of the sports team as a recipient that this service could solve the traffic problems they experienced. However, some parents have been concerned about not receiving sufficient information from the sports team about the service.

A large part of the customers use the service week after week, and for these customers (or their parents) we solve a time squeeze between work, dinner and driving the children to training. The challenge has been to recruit new customers continuously. There has been feedback about children enjoying each others company while using the DRT service: "More fun to travel with the other kids than a car trip with parents."

Cost - benefit

The pilot is designed in such a way that we only have route-realized costs when a departure is run, and a route is only run if it has been booked. This means that the route-related costs are directly related to the use of the service. The average cost for a departure in the project is NOK 350, - and with an average number of passengers of 2.1 per departure, this means that each passenger costs NOK 166.

Of 800 possible departures, 6,25% (pr 03.12) of the departures were driven based on booking. For the passenger (under 18 years), the ticket price is NOK 21 (child price) per trip. As these DRT routes are part of the county's ordinary tariff system, these routes are also open for ordinary Period Cards. Season tickets for young people cost NOK 300 per month, this ticket allows travelling throughout the county.

In the project, a large part of the background for the pilot was major traffic and safety challenges. Parents' driving and picking up children for sports training, one child in each car, combined with older children using bicycles along the same road. Therefore, the pilot was addressed as a solution to give parents alternatives to how the children could get to and from training.

CONCLUSION

The experiences from working closely with partner Gjøvik municipality to create a service and a pilot based on the knowledge we had from two case studies about the traffic around the sports team have been fruitful. The work included elements of innovation and creativity and a new way of thinking about DRT in Innlad county.

We also worked closely with the operator; Gjøvik Taxi, to prepare the routes and together with all three, we also built online booking with a user interface/solution. All three partners worked intensively, and we managed to finish building the concept, and the service was launched in mid-October 2020. We started working on this specific service in August 2020. In parallel with the design of the service, we also managed to work with marketing and communication.

Before the relaunch in August 2021, we focused on marketing and communication, as the service had already been set up.

Overall, our experience with the operation of the pilot and the technical part of the pilot is that this worked very well, and the collaboration with partners we had contracts/agreements with was functioning.

When we look back, we see that we should have had a more detailed communication strategy with the sports team and perhaps also an agreement on who did what and when. This is because the sports club is closer to its members than the other partners in the project.

This work aimed to establish a DRT service through collaboration with Gjøvik Municipality, as the process progressed, it turned out to create a new type of service, which included activity-based DRT, ordinary ticketing and online ordering.

The project was based on insights from two case studies (one external and one from Gjøvik municipality) and we also used the same learning goals as Ruter does in their innovation process. We also changed some parts of the pilot during the pilot period.

With a pilot that only runs for four months, we experienced that it takes time before customers get used to a new service, and it seems difficult for parents to send their children with DRT service instead of driving themselves to the training.



Response

 **Interreg**
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Read more about the
RESPONSE project here:
response-project.eu

