

# The Road to 2037

Long Term Plan 2020 - 2037

**THE PILGRIMAGE  
- A JOURNEY  
OF WONDER**



**PILEGRIMSLEDEN**  
ST. OLAVSVEGENE TIL TRONDHEIM

PHOTO:  
Eskil Roll og NPS

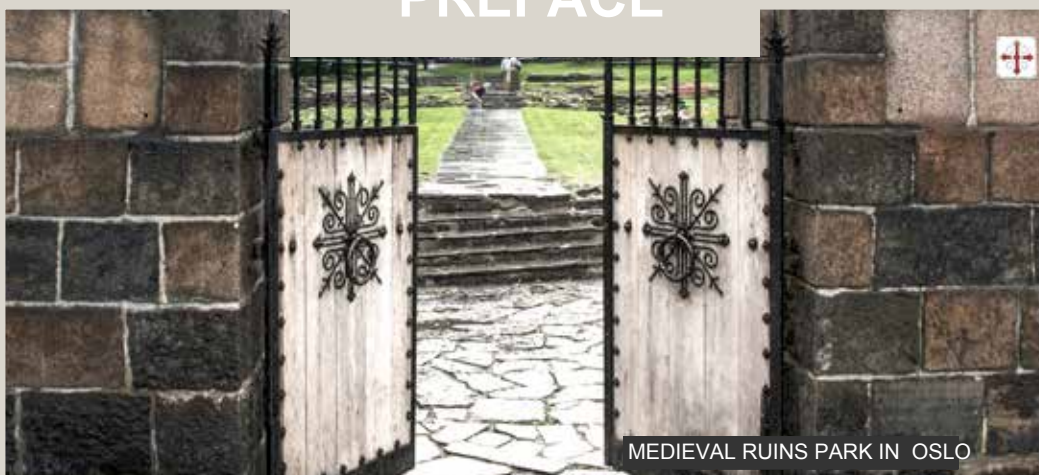
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Tone Harbakk

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# PREFACE



To pilgrimage is an old practice, and has since the reopening of Pilegrimsleden in 1997 evolved into a new phenomenon; today's pilgrimage is a multicultural and multireligious community.

Every year an increasing number of pilgrims from the entire world make the journey to Trondheim and the Nidaros Cathedral. In addition, we can also see how the locals along the pilgrimage routes use "their" trails for everything from recreational and educational purposes to Christian education initiatives.

During the Pilgrimage from Oslo to Trondheim in the summer of 2017 the Minister of Culture expressed a wish to continue investing in the expansion of the Pilgrimage Paths, with a perspective spanning 20 years into the future.

The focus on the Pilgrimage Paths involves and engages with a broad spectrum of actors, municipalities and county municipalities the pilgrimage routes go through have throughout history contributed towards the investment with different resources. Likewise has the Directorate for Cultural Heritage been a key player in drive and support the project. Voluntary teams and organisations have also contributed to local initiatives and pilgrimage experiences.

The work on the new long term plan has generated expectations and strengthened motivation for further work. Through input-meetings and an extensive consultation round with a total of 52 consultation responses from municipalities, county municipalities, dioceses, regional pilgrimage centers, pilgrim associations and other collaborators have we gathered many great contributions, different perspectives, opinions and advice regarding the direction and framework for the work ahead.

A big thank you to everyone for constructive, creative, wise and ambitious contributions, suggestions and ideas!

Trondheim, 13.12.19

The Board / Nidaros Cathedral Restoration Workshop

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## **TO JOURNEY ALONG HISTORICAL TRAILS TO SACRED DESTINATIONS IS THE DISTINCTIVE FEATURE OF THE PILGRIMAGE, BOTH HISTORICALLY AND TODAY.**

In contrast to earlier times, we today live in a multicultural and multireligious society, which reflects how today's pilgrims define the reasons and motive behind their journey. Today's pilgrimage phenomenon is characterized by diversity, with the pilgrim being open and seeking and for many the pilgrimage journey is one for exploring and searching for meaning in one's own life. Experiences of nature, encounters and community, culture and history are important. Central for many is a wish for slowness, freedom, simplicity, carefreeness, quiet, spirituality and the sharing. Today's pilgrims have ownership of their own journey, no one can make claims to "own" today's pilgrimage phenomenon.

### **MISSION AND MANDATE**

In the assignment letter from the Ministry of Culture of 29. August 2017 named: "Strategy for Pilgrimage Investment" was established in 2012 by the then FDA (now KMD), Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Trade and Industry. It is according to this declared that the pilgrimage project shall be organised in such a way that it contributes to fulfilling key objectives in a number of areas of society (environment, industry, church and culture). The overall strategic path choices described by the plan will also be accounted for.

Even though vision, overarching goal and strategic paths are established in the plan from 2012, it can still be pertinent and necessary to evaluate if there exists new premisses for the work going forward, and to develop a more concrete plan of action for the 20 years ahead.

The Ministry considers it natural that the development of the long term plan involves the consideration of how the vision of the investment can best be formulated. The most important part of the work will at this moment be to describe the present situation. An appropriate and relevant assessment will be critical in identifying which goals should be set and which measures should be prioritised and initiated.

The plan should address such subjects as the organisation and distribution of the pilgrimage work (national centers, regional centers), and the application of government funding. It should address questions regarding the approval of leaders and prioritising between them (e.g. Olavsleden versus Rørdal, Selja, Valdres). Furthermore, the plan should specify the priorities between areas and premises for investment. It should also identify relevant collaborators (on state, municipal and private levels), and contribute to specifying the collaborator's role and responsibilities.



## 2. SUMMARY

Norway has an old and strong pilgrimage tradition. One of the oldest written sources describing these traditions is the accounts of Adam of Bremen, who travelled along the coast from Bremen to Nidaros around the year 1075 as an envoy of the Archbishop in Hamburg. Adam of Bremen describes Trondheim as Norway's most important city, with an influx of people seeking healing at the grave of Saint Olav.

Nidaros Cathedral and Saint Olav's grave was the country's biggest pilgrimage destination during the Middle Ages, but other destinations such as the stave church in Rørdal, the chapel in Filefjell, and the monastery on the Sunniva-island Selja were important destinations visited by many pilgrims.

The Reformation in 1937 led to the end of saint worship and pilgrimage, and thus to the end of traditions such as the olsok, or "Olav's Wake", celebration in Norway. First in 1897 was the olsok celebration brought back in Trondheim. The 1950s saw the first performance of the "Saint Olav Drama" in Stiklestad, and the Olavsfestdagene as a celebration of olsok in Trondheim and other places. The end of the 1950s saw the first groups of pilgrims seeking out Nidaros Cathedral, and pilgrims on their way to Trondheim and the cathedral have visited the Eysteinskyrka on Dovrefjell every summer since its consecration in 1969.

Ever since Crown Prince Haakon Magnus oversaw the official opening of the Pilgrimage Paths in Trondheim the 28th July 1997 have there been work to facilitate for pilgrimages along old pilgrim trails leading towards Nidaros Cathedral in Trondheim.

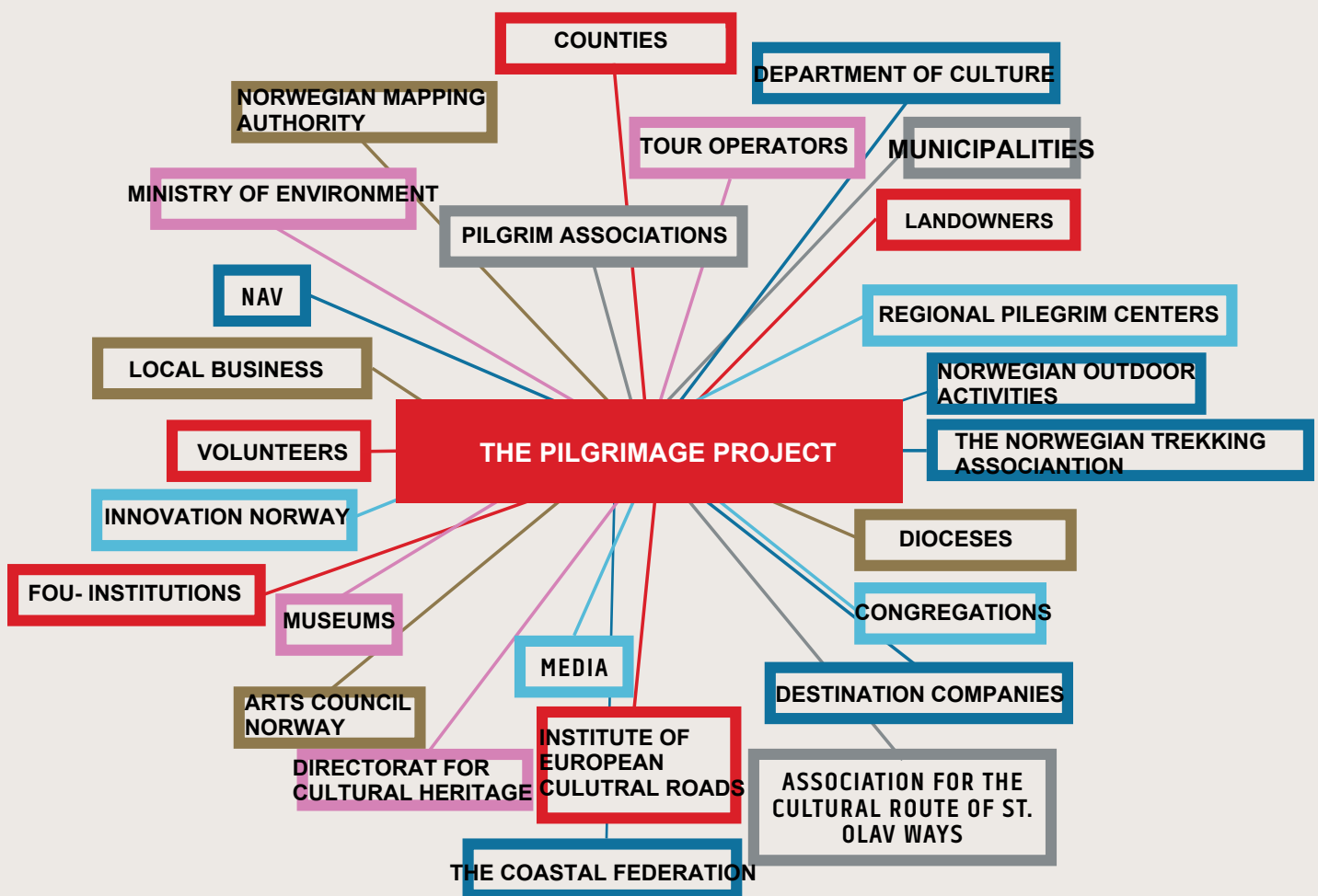
The revitalisation of the pilgrimage work gained traction when the Ministry of Culture in 2010 established regional pilgrim centers (RPS) along Gudbrandsdalsleden from Oslo to Trondheim as an area of investment. The regional centers are connecting meeting points between actors in their own regions, and are the operative links on the full pilgrimage. The same year saw the Pilgrimage gain the status of European Culture Route under the Council of Europe's programme for cultural cooperation and the year after saw the Pilgrimage awarded the Norwegian Outdoors Award.

The state strategy for the expansion and investment in the pilgrimage paths and the establishment of national pilgrim centers in 2012 both saw an increase in the interest and motivation for future investment. Through the European pilgrimage-renaissance from the 1990s to present day we can see the evolution of today's pilgrim, something which also strikes and affects more and more Norwegians. The last few years have seen the number of pilgrims undertaking both short and long journeys increase each year, parallel with the establishment of even more pilgrimage trails. Pilgrimages are undertaken of lone travellers, organiser groups and those on short walks and hikes in their local area.

Norwegian nature and culture, quietness, local cuisine, church spaces, hospitality and closeness are qualities which give the Pilgrimage to Trondheim opportunities for an increase in travellers and pilgrims, and which strengthen the value-creation and further positive development of the Pilgrimage.

To succeed in this it is crucial to build on the good experiences of local and regional actors and contributors, and to reopen and develop more of the approved trails after the model of the Gudbrandsdalsleden.

The Pilgrimage project has a wide range of stakeholders and key partners. Quality meeting-arenas, a climate for interaction and clear roles will be important for the future development of the project.







ST. OLAVSLEDEN



### 3. RECOMMENDATION

An increase in traffic along the pilgrimages in Norway, and a strengthened realisation of the vision of “the pilgrimages as good trails through Norwegian nature and kulture, characterised by values fundamental to the human condition and existence and which open for an inner journey” can be achieved by expanding upon the experiences and expertise found in the pilgrimage network.

Decisive moments to secure the pilgrimage investment of the next 20 years are to clarify the coordinating mission belonging to Nidaros Cathedral's Restoration Workshop (NDR). National pilgrim centers (NPS) must have the capacity, maneuverability and mandate to work for good cooperation relations with central actors, and contribute to framework conditions giving the organisation as a whole the best possible opportunity for common goal achievement. There are mainly three areas where national coordination is required to further the development of the project:

- Many stakeholders with different roles, expectations and resources
- Local and regional engagement and ownership
- Commitments to the Council of Europe's expanded sub-agreement regarding culture routes, whereupon Norway has been a member since 2011

NPS' responsibility for the national pilgrimage initiative is going to be an integrated part of the strategy of NDR. Strategy and measures must be coordinated and planned interdisciplinary and comprehensively in the organisation in order to secure, develop and balance the organisations' capacity, competency and finances over time. Annually planned measures and projects will form the basis for the work plans of the individual departments.

Furthermore, the regional pilgrimage divisions must be supported with sustainable finances in order to handle the increase in activity.

The pilgrimage trails must be differentiated from local and regional objectives, financial opportunities, capacity potential and availability.

We recommend that the RPS-model from the Gudbrandsdalsleden also be applied to the coastal pilgrimage with up to 4 centers and to Borgleden with 1 center. In addition, we recommend that RPS Stiklestad receive operating subsidies on par with the other centers.

We recommend that there initially be established a collaboration between coordinators of the aforementioned approved for centers for information flow and as intermediaries between NPS and the local and regional network of stakeholders.

Additionally, we recommend that NPS should have an overall responsibility as a national coordinator on the pilgrimage field for other pilgrimage trails, and distribute resources for activities on these trails.







## 4. A LOOK BACK

1993-2012

At the beginning of the 1990s there was dialogue between the governor of Oppland and Hamar's bishop about the possibility to establish a connected trail for pilgrims. The idea was put forward to the Minister of Environment, who took the initiative to further the "Pilgrimage Project" in conjunction with the "Year of Outdoor Activities" in 1993.

Between 1993-97, the project was grounded in the Ministry of Climate and Environment, with the goal to utilise historical trails and stimulate outdoor activities where culture- and nature-experiences unite. Furthermore, they wished to convey the history and spiritual traditions of the pilgrimage to new generations of pilgrims.

The Crown Prince, Haakon Magnus, saw to the official opening of the pilgrimage paths in Trondheim the 28th July 1997, and thus the "Pilgrimage Project" came to an end.

In a design competition, the submission of Johanna Figur Waddington, consisting of an Olav's cross and valknut, was named winner.

This logo was used to mark the re-established pilgrimage trails, and it is also used on brand goods related to the Pilgrimage.

In 2004 there was conducted a large poll in Oppland related to pilgrimage, with the goal to collect information which could help establish the pilgrimage on the map once again, and in 2005 the Directorate for Cultural Heritage (RA) and the Directorate for Nature Conservation arranged a conference regarding the pilgrimage in Trondheim.

In 2007 the Pilgrimage became a pilot project in the Value-Creation programme in the Cultural Heritage division of RA. The project had 5 overarching goals:

**1. Increased use of the pilgrimage trails**

**2. Increased quality of management, marking, cultural heritage and overnight accommodations**

**3. Increased business development**

**4. Increased knowledge about the pilgrimage both nationally and internationally**

**5. Dissemination of competency and experience from the project to the management of the pilgrimage**

The final report of the project gave the following recommendations:

**- Municipalities and county municipalities should develop their own action plans for the pilgrimage trails in their areas - to ensure continuity and quality in the work**

**- The church should specify their role regarding the pilgrimage**

**- Volunteers should gather themselves organisationally under a national umbrella**

**- The potential inherent in the fact that the pilgrimage gained European Cultural Route status in 2010 must be utilised**

Stiftelsen Nidaros Pilegrimsgård (NPG) was established in 2008, whose main purposes were to impart information, guide and facilitate pilgrims, contribute to the development of the pilgrimage in the region, and function as a reception for pilgrims arriving in Trondheim. It was NPG which led the work to facilitate that it gained European Cultural Route status in 2010, under the name St. Olav Ways.

In 2008 the Minister of Culture gathered initiative for an investigation into the pilgrimage work in Norway. The goal with the investigation was to create a good model for management, development and renewing of the pilgrimage traditions. The report "On the Way of Life" was published in 2009. In it was proposed a model with local actors and development where church, municipality, tourism, culture and outdoor activities are all included. Further it also recommended the establishment of regional pilgrim centers along the pilgrimage trails. The report also pointed out a requirement for the establishment and creation of international networks.

The Minister of Culture decided that the pilgrimage from Oslo to Trondheim, over Dovre, should be an area of investment and in 2010 five regional pilgrim centers were established along Gudbrandsdalsleden. These were created to Oslo, Gran, Hamar, Hundrop and Dovrefjell.

The centers were organised differently and got allocation letters and economic parameters through their own respective dioceses.

In the allocation letters from the Ministry there is written that the regional centers shall "convey information and guiding regarding the pilgrimage, arrange group pilgrimages and contribute to the development of trails and pilgrimages in their own region". The regional work will then contribute to a renewal and development of the pilgrimage tradition in Norway, develop the pilgrimage's quality and quantity and be a source of knowledge, drive and mentorship for the municipalities in their region.

The National Pilgrim Center (NPS) was established in 2012 to further develop the pilgrimage as a concept, manage the approved trails, follow up on the municipalities' responsibilities for the local trails, stimulate an increase of use of

the pilgrim trails, contribute to good information and marketing, coordinate the work of the regional centers and follow up on and develop national and international contacts and networks. In its developing and early stages, the NPS was organised as a division of the Directorate of Cultural Heritage (RA).



**ERIK AT BUDSJORD**



## 5. THE PILGRIMAGE PLATFORM - STRATEGY FOR INVESTMENT 2012

In November 2012 the government approved a common state strategy for investment in the pilgrimage trails. The strategy was established by the Ministry of Renewal, Administration and Church Affairs, the Ministry of Culture, The Ministry of Food and Agriculture, the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Industry and Trade. The range of ministries involved behind the strategy illustrates the breadth of interest and perspectives involved in the state investment of the development of the pilgrimage route.

The overall goal of the strategy is:

**“The Pilgrimage route shall give opportunities for passage through a landscape rich in nature-, cultural heritage- and culture-experiences. It shall be taken care of as an important part of European cultural heritage and provide a unique encounter with Norwegian nature, cultural heritage, culture, religion and people. The strategy shall contribute to value creation and a positive development along the pilgrimage through an increase in use of the trails.”**

The pilgrimage investment shall be implemented such that it contributes to the achievement of the central objectives on the societal areas of climate, industry, church and culture.

To clarify the direction for further work on the development of pilgrimage traditions the strategy point out the following paths:

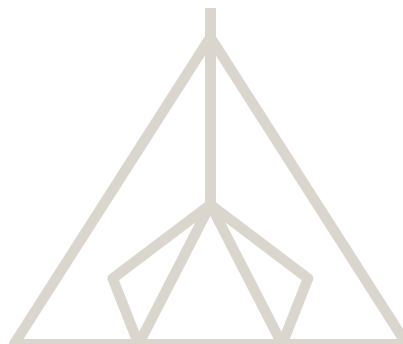
- Cultural heritage- and scientifically minded selection and maintenance of pilgrimage trails
- Industry development and support of sustainable travel and local food and agriculture production
- Ecclesiastical involvement and openness encouraging different interests and motivations
- Olav's legacy put in focus with Nidaros Cathedral as the final destination of the pilgrimage

The ambition of the strategy is that the investment will contribute to the sharing of pilgrimage traditions, cultural heritage, nature and landscape, outdoor activities and physical activity, the development of local industry, sustainable travel and viable communities along the pilgrimage trails.

The goal is to develop the pilgrimage's potential as a national and international tourism product, and through this to increase the local and national hikes and pilgrimages in the country.

When it comes to the organisation of the work the strategy dictates that the arrangement of regional pilgrim centers will be continued. Furthermore will a permanent pilgrim center named the “National Pilgrim Center” (NPS) be established, with management and coordination responsibilities over the regional centers.

The overall choices made in the 2012 strategy have been driving for the construction and work of the pilgrimage investment project over the last few years. These choices have given the pilgrimage route to Trondheim a clear profile and solid anchoring on central areas, and the guidelines in the 2012 strategy will also set the course directions for the road forward towards 2037.





## 6. STATUS OF THE WORK

This chapter accounts the formation of the pilgrimage investment project, the development of the organisational structure, the establishment of new pilgrimage trails and the increase in traffic of pilgrims during the last few years.

### FORMATION

Based on the state strategy, NPS was founded as a permanent organisation. It was organised as a division under the Directorate of Cultural Heritage (RA) and the Ministry of Environment appointed a board of five for NPS in April 2012. The mandate for the board was developed by the Ministry of Environment, the RA, the Ministry of Industry and Trade and the Ministry of Renewal, Administration and Church Affairs. The Mandate lays out the board's following main objectives:

“The board is the foremost leader of NPS and will ensure that the center follow up on the national pilgrimage strategy, the RA's annual allocation letter and this mandate. The board is also responsible for following up on and controlling the economic development and management of NPS, as well as ensuring the center meet the requirements laid out in the relevant legislation, such as the law of regulation on public procurement and regulations and provisions on financial management under the state. The board is further responsible for the strategic development of the organisation, based on the pilgrimage strategy. The board is responsible for purposeful profiling and marketing of the approved upon pilgrimage trails, good communication with external communities both national and international, good coordination of the five regional centers and that relevant resources contribute to increasing the quality of the pilgrimage.”

Five permanent positions at NPS were established, and the center has been in operation as a continuation of the temporary national center since the autumn of 2013.

In the ministry's mandate to the board one can find the following written on the organisation of labour:

“The National Pilgrimage Center will be established as an ordinary executive agency under the Directorate of Cultural Heritage. This is a relation the Government must formally take a stance on, something which will happen in conjunction with the revised national budget of 2013. In connection with this, we point out that it first in 2014 will be established a separate expenditure and income chapter for NPS.”

During its first years, the NPS was an autonomous unit with administrative support functions under the RA, with the board of the NPS as responsible management. The pilgrimage investment project was a plan involving many ministries, where the Ministry of Environment had the main responsibility and coordinated the control signals and the financing from the involved departments. The RA established overarching priorities and budget in annual allocation letters and the NPS received an allocation with earmarked resources to the regional centers. The RA in turn received annual plans, budgets and reports from NPS, and had regular meetings with the board leader and director of the NPS.

The formation of the five regional pilgrim centers in 2010 built upon a strategic choice of prioritising Gudbrandsdalsleden as an area of investment. This was also laid out in the annual allocation letters from the RA. The term “approved pilgrimage trails” is used both in the mandate of the NPS board where it says that “...the main priority will be directed towards the approved pilgrimage trails”, and in the 2012 strategy where it says that “the pilgrimage investment shall have a main focus on the approved pilgrimage trails...”. The phrase referring to the trails opened in the period of 1997-2012:



- **Gudbrandsdalsleden (1997)**
- **St. Olavsleden (1997)**
- **Østerdalsledene (2000)**
- **Romboleden (2000)**
- **Nordleden (2003)**
- **Folloleden (2012)**

In 2013 the Nidaros Pilgrimsgård (NPG) was established as a regional center, with tasks and financial allocation from the NPS like the other centers. This was done to strengthen the initiative along the last stretch of the pilgrimage trail towards Trondheim, to ensure a welcoming reception to pilgrims when they reach their destination. The increase in regional centers did not lead to an increase in financial allocation, so from 2013 the earmarked RPS-resources were distributed between six centers.

In 2016 the Regional Pilgrim Center Stiklestad AS was established after a three-year long development project financed by Nord-Trøndelag county municipality with supplements from the NPS. The owners and management of the center are the municipalities along the pilgrimage trail on the Norwegian side, Nidaros diocese and the Stiklestad National Arts Center. With close cooperation with the pilgrimage trail on the Swedish side of the border, the RPS Stiklestad has received resources through the Interreg-project Green Highway. RPS Stiklestad does not receive fixed subsidies from the NPS.

In the development of RPS Stiklestad the pilgrimage work received a regional operative resource on the pilgrimage trail. This has strengthened the initiative and led to a heightened prioritisation of the work on this part of the trail.

In 2016 the NPS transferred from being under the RA to the Nidaros Restoration Workshop (NDR), an administrative body under the Ministry of Culture.

NPS was organised as its own division on line with the other departments, such as the National Competence Center for Protected Stone Buildings.

On one hand, the reorganisation of the pilgrimage investment project strengthened the project as a larger organisation now overtook responsibility to see it through. NDR have the resources in both competency and capacity to complete and strengthen the work related to the pilgrimage. On the other hand, the pilgrimage initiative is an additional project taken on by an organisation with a main focus on restoring and maintaining Nidaros Cathedral and the Archbishop's Palace, and to share the history of both monuments and Saint Olav.

Under the RA, the pilgrimage project was managed by allocation letters to the NPS, and the financing of NPS and the RPS' was jointly funded by ministries, coordinated by the Ministry of Environment.

With the transfer of oversight, the allocation of resources for the pilgrimage project now goes to NDR, which allocate earmarked resources to the regional centers. This entails, amongst other things, that the operating budget of the NPS is decided by NDR after an internal evaluation of the organisations overall framework and necessity.

After the transfer of oversight in 2016, the board members in NPS were also released from their positions, and the operation and management of NPS is now included as a responsibility of the NDR board.

The experiences so far show that the financial framework of the NPS has reduced after the pilgrimage project was handed over to NDR. The reason for this reduction is that the loss of value creation funds as subsidies from the RA has not been compensated for with other resources after the NPS became part of NDR, ref. The table on page 31. Furthermore, there is feedback expressing how the role of the NPS has become unclear to key partners, who call for clear leadership of the national pilgrimage project.

## THE PILGRIMAGE IN NORWAY

Today we have two categories of pilgrimage trails in Norway: Olavsleden, which has Nidaros Cathedral as destination and other regional trails with other pilgrim destinations. NPS has approval- and coordination-responsibilities over the first category, whilst the category so far is not under the NPS' jurisdiction. In 2010, Olavsleden gained the status of European Culture Route by the Council of Europe's programme for European Culture Routes, in a Nordic collaboration between Norway, Sweden and Denmark. The status recertifies every three years and in the first two periods all official pilgrimage trails were considered part of the status. During the recertification in 2018, conditions were made regarding the organisation, content and visibility of the pilgrimage.

This led to the establishment of the Association for the Cultural Routes of St. Olav Ways (ACSOW). NPS is "Route Manager" and secretariat for the Nordic members association responsible for the management of the status of European Cultural Route.

### Gudbrandsdalsleden

Gudbrandsdalsleden was opened in 1997 and has contributed to the revitalisation of the pilgrimage phenomenon, to open the pilgrimage expression, and to establish the development of local industry and tourism-focused thinking into the pilgrimage investment project. The regional pilgrimage centers along the route receive fixed state funding, something which has sparked substantial resources through support from county municipalities, municipalities, other actors, and through their own income and project finances. About 71% of non-local pilgrims arriving in Trondheim during the past year has come from Gudbrandsdalsleden.

Gudbrandsdalsleden is one of the longest pilgrimage trails in Norway, and was the main road to Nidaros during the Middle Ages.

Gudbrandsdalsleden has a varied and beautiful cultural landscape and goes through open towns and small villages, old native forests and wide valleys. This trail also stretches across Dovrefjell, a mighty, mountainous highland area on the border between Gudbrandsdalen and Trøndelag. On the Gudbrandsdalsleden you will experience quiet, animal wildlife, breath-taking views, cultural history and, last but not least, plenty of culinary experiences based on local cuisine.

There are plenty of overnight accommodations opportunities along the trail, from simple pilgrim hospices, camping grounds and hotels, to beautiful historical farms. The trail is marked well. It has available overnight accommodation capacity and several transportation opportunities at start and finish points including planes, trains and busses. On parts of the trail there is also a baggage-delivery system available during peak season.

### St. Olavsleden

This trail goes from Selånger via Stiklestad to Trondheim. The last part from Levanger has two parallel trails, the one going inland over Markabygd and the one along the fjord out to Tautra. About 22% of pilgrims arriving in Trondheim in 2018 chose the St. Olavsleden. The trail has good transport opportunities through close proximity to the railway for large parts of the route both in Norway and Sweden, and with airports at start and destination.

St. Olavsleden was opened in 1997 and is today coordinated by the Regional Pilgrim Center of Stiklestad. Parallel with the establishment at Stiklestad was pilgrimage made an area of investment by an Interreg-project in 2012 where the municipalities Trondheim, Østersund and Sundsvall focused on strengthening cooperation through common tourism development initiatives.

The two initiatives have given the work on St. Olavsleden a lift on both sides of the nation's borders, and the trail is today the only pilgrimage trail with organised infrastructure which connects to a marked and organised trail in Sweden.

Here one can hike through Sweden and Norway, from coast to coast, in beautiful nature.

The trail follows parts of the same road the Viking King Olav Haraldsson chose when he returned to Norway before the Battle of Stiklestad. The route offers varied nature and culture experiences, along rivers and through deep forests, over mountain ranges by the border and through wide grain districts by the fjord of Trondheim. Overnight accommodations vary, with both small hospices, camping grounds, hotels and traditional overnight and serving places with historical influences and backgrounds. It is also well marked.

### **Østerdalsleden**

Østerdalsleden was opened in year 2000 and started where Klaralven becomes Trysiløelven, at the border between Sweden and Norway. Here by Oddheim in Lutnes stands Trysil municipality's milestone which declares the 379 kilometers to Nidaros.

In 2013 the pilgrimage network for the Østerdalsleden was established and today it functions as a coordinator for work along the trail. The network does not receive fixed state resources.

For those wishing to focus on incredible nature, and can utilise a map and compass, the Østerdalsleden is a good choice. Østerdalsleden goes for the most part through beautiful forests and mountainous areas and simple valleys. Overnight accommodations mostly consist of forest lodges and huts or camping grounds. But there are also possibilities to stay at hotels or tradition-rich overnight and serving places. The trail is well suited for travellers preferring tents and sleeping bags. The trail is partially marked.

### **Nordleden**

Nordleden is strongly connected to the Olav's traditions, both in the form of churches and church art as well as holy water sources. The trail is characterised by quiet forests and great culture and nature landscapes from Gløshaug Church in Grong down to the historical Stiklestad.

The trail best suits travellers preferring tents and sleeping bags, and those who can navigate with map and compass. The trail has few overnight accommodation opportunities and is poorly marked.

### **Romboleden**

Romboleden can with certainty be called an old travel route for pilgrims, merchants and travellers through the ages, which has driven trade and cultural exchanges between Norway and Sweden. In each end of the trail you find important destinations; Saint Olav in Trondheim and the Holy Birgitta in Vadstena. Romboleden goes over and along mountain ranges by the border, along which you'll encounter the traditional culture of the Southern Sami people. The trail can be characterised by a varied landscape, from snowy mountain tops and valleys at 1000 meters above ocean levels, to lush coastal climates along the Trondheim fjord. Most of the trail covers mountains and forests.

Through the untouched mountain ranges on the Swedish side of the trail are tents the only overnight accommodations option.

Other parts of the trail offer hospices, camping grounds and hotels. The trail is well suited to those who can utilise maps and compasses. It is not well marked.

### **Borgleden**

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## **Kystpilegrimsleia**

The Coastal Pilgrimage was approved in 2017 after several years of work between both the RA, the dioceses and the county municipalities along the coast from Egersund to Trondheim. After the approval of the route there was established an organisational project to expand and develop a management- and financial model. The project concluded as of 31.12.19 and several regional pilgrimage centers are under planning and foundation.

The goal is to develop and establish a permanent management model for the coastal pilgrimage route. The experiences along the route represent something new in our time's pilgrimage work, where we traditionally think of pilgrimage trails. There are reasons to believe that the coastal route was one of the most utilised travel routes to and from Nidaros, and that many pilgrims arrived at their destination by sea.

A revitalisation of this tradition will contribute to an exciting diversity for today's pilgrims, and lays the foundations for experiences for new consumers. The coast is rich in history and cultural heritage, and through work with the coastal pilgrimage can we establish an interconnected journey between cultural heritages and holy places via key locations on the journey to Trondheim.

A pilgrimage opportunity along the coast is also an important contribution to expand the pilgrimage season to Nidaros, where weather and road conditions over the mountain ranges restrict inland opportunities.

During the Middle Ages both Norwegians and foreigners made pilgrimages along the coast to Nidaros. It was both faster by boat than on land, and along the entire coast one can spot traces of Olav, as both Viking and saint.

The coastal pilgrimage route offers many and sizable contrasts. The ocean in storm and stillness. Incredible forces. Sheer cliff faces in frothing foam spray. Sheltered coves with shiny rock faces. The harsh and the spectacular. Quiet hissing and soft waves.

Overnight accommodations vary from hotels to camping grounds. The trail is partially marked.

## **Valldalsleden**

Valldalsleden opened in 2015, as a result of a project between Norddal, Rauma, Lesja and Dovre municipalities in cooperation with Pilgrims Center Dovrefjell.

The trail goes from beautiful fjord to mountain, from coast to inland. A trail in the footsteps of Saint Olav, for whom it served as escape route and for today's travellers it is an experience path. When Saint Olav fled the country the winter of 1028-29, he docked his ships in Valldal and from there travelled over the mountain to Lesja and Dovre. It is this route Valldalsleden follows. It starts at the fjord, goes up the valley and over the mountain through Reinheimen National Park. From here the trail goes down in Lesja and further to Dovre where it connects to the Gudbrandsdalsleden. Overnight accommodations vary from hotels to camping ground, tourist-lodges and farm accommodations. The trail is partially marked and map and compass is recommended.

## **Pilegrim i Nord**

Fishing and fishing exports in the north of Norway have in large part generated resources for the building of Nidaros Cathedral. The goal of the project "Pilgrim in the North" (PIN) has been to establish connected coastal trails from Trondenes to Trondheim. The work started as a joint project between Sør-Hågaland diocese and Nordlands-musea in the autumn of 2015, financed by Nordland county municipality.

Now, Gildeskål municipality have become active in the drive of this work. There are plans to establish a regional pilgrim center in Gildeskål for coordination of PIN. The pilgrimage will go in the direction the fish has been transported.

### **Tunsbergleden**

Vestfold county municipality has in collaboration with Buskerud and Akershus county municipality worked on establishing a pilgrimage trail on the western side of the Oslo fjord from Larvik to Oslo.

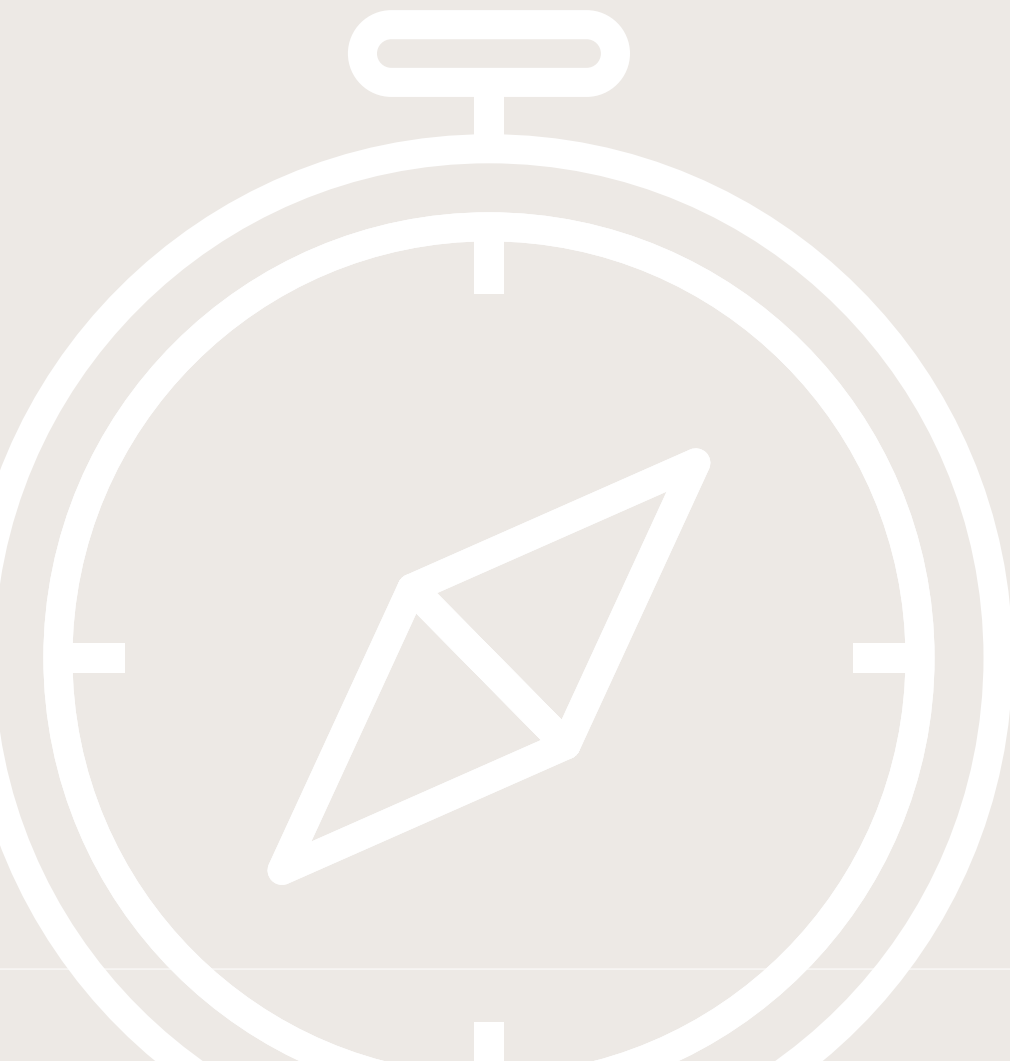
Tunsbergleden was approved in 2019, and through this the Norwegian network of pilgrimage trails will connect to Hærveien over Jylland, which is part of the cooperation in the status of European Cultural Routes. Tunsbergleden can offer a diversity of cultural experiences in lush landscapes and easily traversable terrain. Here the pilgrimage season is long and one can take advantage of the sounds of the deciduous forest and bird song, light green in spring and red and yellow during autumn, along with several cultural heritages. The trail goes along populated communities and neighbourhoods, historical city centers and streets with thousand-year-old farm roads. Overnight accommodations vary, with hospices, camping grounds, hotels and traditional accommodation opportunities with historical inspiration and history. The trail is partially marked

### **Glåmdalsleden**

A project under the Norwegian Church, Eidskog museum and Eidskog municipality in Hedmark. The goal of the project is to establish a trail from the Swedish border through the municipality and the its neighbours to the Cathedral in Hamar, as a connection between the established trail from the Karlstad area in Sweden to Gudbrandsdalsleden towards Trondheim. Alternatively, they're looking at the opportunity to connect the trail onto Østerdalsleden. The Eidskog trail was approved by the RA in 2015.

### **Selje, Røldal og Valdres**

Sunnivaleia to Selja, the pilgrimage route to Rølda and the route to Valdres are free-standing regional pilgrimage trails. These trails are not prioritised by state investment but nevertheless represent important pilgrimage goals which should be brought into the responsibilities of the NPS. The work connected to these trails are of great importance to their local communities and regions, and for national pilgrimage investment, both historical and current.



## STATISTICS

NPS and the regional pilgrim centers have worked continuously with methodology for counting and data collection to get the best possible overview, and to develop informative and covering statistics of the ongoing developments.

The last few years have seen statistics gathered from the following sources and parameters:

- Registrering of outgoing pilgrims in Oslo
- Reception of pilgrims in Trondheim
- Visits to regional centers
- Number of overnight stays related to pilgrimages

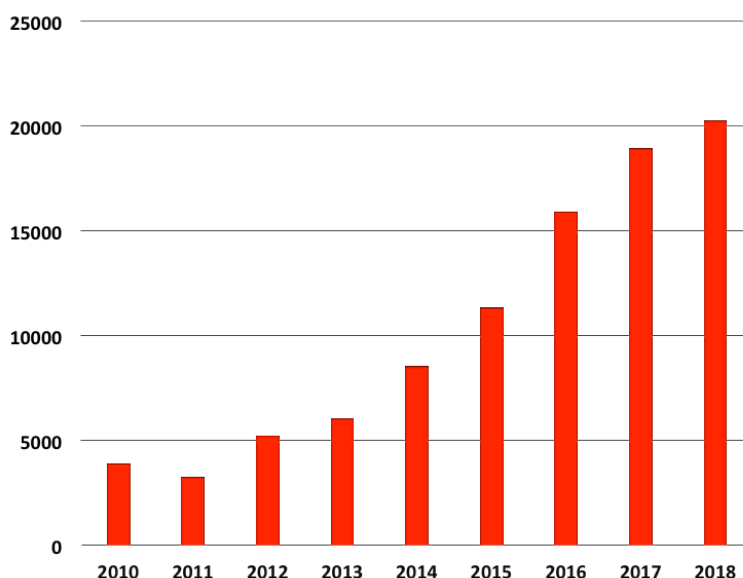
Furthermore has tread mats and infra-red counters been distributed along the trails. These devices count the traffic of passing people

and give us a chance to compare data over time

A challenge when it comes to collection of data is that the pilgrimage movement is far larger than NPS so far has had the capacity to measure, and that some of the activity in the area is organised in a way that access to information is difficult. It is the regional centers which primarily stand behind the data collection and who have contact with local actors. With the establishment of new pilgrimage trails which are not managed by a regional center we lose further opportunities to gather data at these new routes.

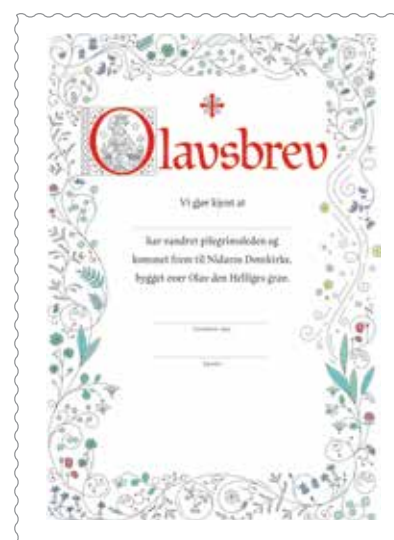
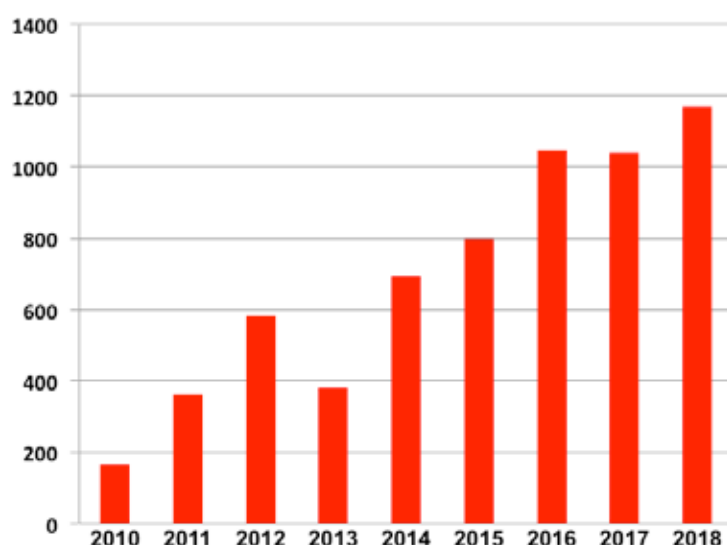
In the numbers where we find a stable and consecutive collecting of data over a longer period of time can we see a steady increase in activity over the past 8 years. The statistics from one of the most extensive and covering parameters, registered

### Registered overnight stays Gudbrandsdalsleden and St. Olavsleden





## Number of Olavs Letters



overnight stays at Gudbrandsdalsleden and St. Olavsleden, which showed an increase of 500% in the period 2010-18, with an average increase of about 22% per year. In 2018 this accounted for 20275 overnight stays at these two trails.

After models from the Santiago de Compostela in Spain can pilgrims which today walk a minimum of the 10 miles towards Trondheim get sent an Olavs Letter as diploma for their journey. The number of Olavs Letters sent out has increased more than 700% since the registry started in 2010, and in 2018 a total of 1170 letters were sent out.

The actual numbers for overnight stays and sent Olavs Letters are relatively low, and therefore the increased numbers indicate a large percentage change. It is important to note, and act upon, that pilgrimage activity has seen a steady, even increase.

The number of overnight stays are based on the accommodations that collect data. Many pilgrims, however, make use of other accommodations, especially in bigger towns and cities. Furthermore, the surveys taken by pilgrims show that many sleep outdoors or in their own tents.

Data from counters out in the terrain show that many of the stretches on the trail are used by far more travellers than what is counted by other sources of data. This indicates that the pilgrimage trails in certain areas are used extensively as an outdoor hiking trail and recreational trail outside the pilgrimage initiative. The broad range of use of the trail thus contribute towards the goal of "an increase in use of the pilgrimage trails".

It is also important to point out that the biggest use of the pilgrimage trail happens locally through activities such as school excursions, religious study and educational programs by local congregations and activities by fitness groups, history collectives and other organisations. It is this use which give the pilgrimage investment volume, and which contributes towards local involvement and ownership. So far there has not been established a good system for registering this alternate use of the pilgrimage trails, and this potential is something NPS will work on further in the future.

- Godkjent St. Olavsvei
- Godkjent St. Olavsveg langs kysten
- Kommende St. Olavsvei
- Kommende St. Olavsvei langs kysten
- Annen pilegrimsled
- Godkjent St. Olavsveg i andre nordiske land







SYGARD GRYTTING



# 7. THE LONG TERM PLAN

2020 – 2037

## VISION:

**Pilegrimsleden – A Journey of Wonder**

## AMBITION:

**Pilegrimsleden - The St. Olav Way will be one of the most important pilgrimages in Europe and a known and attractive experience in Norway.**

## GOAL:

**In a long-term perspective the goals for the development of the pilgrimage trails in Norway are this:**

- impart out historical, cultural and spiritual cultural heritage with a wide range of good experience opportunities
- have a solid anchoring in both the local, regional and national and contribute to value creation locally
- establishes with a basis in foreseeable framework which enables investment in line with the increase and development of pilgrimage activities
- is seen as an attractive journey and unified experiences with sustainable and climate-neutral footprints
- is inclusive, easily available and clearly communicated
- gives room and framework for peace, reflection and contemplation
- develops the status as an European Cultural Route
- is an attractive and current partner in international projects

## THE FOUR GROUND PILLARS

### CHURCH, FAITH AND SPIRITUALITY

The Pilgrimage project will have a clear ecclesiastical basis, and at the same time be open and inclusive towards people of different faiths, culture and religion. The pilgrimage is a religious tradition towards a holy destination, and each church can be seen as a local pilgrimage destination, even though many of those who undertake the journey view Nidaros Cathedral as their ultimate destination.

In our time it is our practices which shape our perspective of life, maybe more than a cleanly intellectual understanding. A pilgrimage can be seen as an old practice of faith which has been revitalised and taken on a renewed

form and meaning for people of our time. The common factor for the church's investment is about developing our sense for the spiritual and holy by playing on elements one can find in the pilgrimage traditions.

The Church of Norway, along with the Catholic Church and other Christian communities are important premise and content providers to the modern pilgrimage phenomenon. Collaboration with schools, diaconal opportunities and congregation-building activities as ecclesiastical educational activities for children and teens, and short local hikes opens for use of the pilgrimage trails by a large number of people. The religious community contributes today to many local uses of the trails. All dioceses in the Church of Norway have a connection to the pilgrimage trails, with many priests working with the pilgrim organisations, and there are several theological studies and projects being done to thematize the role, meaning and function of the holy space.

Pilgrimage doesn't only involve hiking through beautiful nature and historical landmarks, but also using that landscape and histories along the way to create depth, reflection and actuality. The Church can touch the pilgrim regardless of where they stand spiritually. Holy spaces are a spaces for all pilgrims, and the journey imparts knowledge, understanding and spiritual standpoint, as well as an experience of the Christian cultural heritage. The Church's relationship to the church room and buildings has changed over the last few decades and now embraces wider.

Open churches along the trail is a symbol of meeting the expectations of the pilgrim to be welcomed, regardless of faith or traditions. For many, an open church is a place to seek quiet, a place to contemplate tradition and history, a culturally historical and architectural experience, or a place for religious practice and answers in the need for spirituality. And for many the church visit will likely be any combination of these perspectives.

The entire pilgrim tradition builds upon a religious practice, with a journey towards a holy destination. This distinction is what makes it different from any other hiking experience. The churches are both a central collaborator and an individual content provider in the work of the pilgrimage project, where many open churches along the trail are one of the measures which must be in place in order to meet the expectations of those who undertake the journey.

## **MEASURES:**

**Preserve the ecclesiastical foundation, renew the pilgrimage tradition and be open and inclusive towards those of differing faith, culture, tradition and motivation. The Church shall impact the pilgrim regardless of spiritual standpoint and further ecumenism, "the whole inhabited world", to create dialogue between the world's many faiths**

- Increase the number of open churches along the trails
- Build a clear profile as a pilgrimage goal for people today
- Facilitate for sending off and receiving pilgrims in churches along the trails
- Collaborate with professional circles and in connection to the church regarding the renewal of the pilgrimage tradition
- Further the holy space as a space for all pilgrims and create dialogue between the world's faiths

## **CULTURE**

Cultural heritage is a common denominator for the pilgrimage investment, with Middle Ages churches, grave sites and different landmarks which connect to the pilgrimage trail as an historical travelling route. This gives us a unique opportunity to increase knowledge and awareness regarding our own cultural heritage. At the same time, it gives us new possibilities to take our heritage into active use

and thus make it relevant for people today. Culture and cultural heritage do not come in set sizes, they are recreated into new initiatives and new lives, because the expressions for our culture today will become tomorrow's heritage. Along the pilgrimage trail many have let themselves be inspired by the cultural heritage and created new institutions and new cultural experiences. This living culture will make up a significant part of what is on offer along the trails.

The Council of Europe's status as a European Cultural Route is a quality-stamp which both attract international tourists and which create expectations regarding the quality, experience and impact of their visit. Strengthening of the Nordic network, and an expansion of the culture trail through both pilgrim routes and thematic collaborators will generate a meaningful potential as an attractive Nordic culture route with Trondheim as an important pilgrimage destination in Europe, both historically and currently relevant for people today.

The culture will stand for an arena of innovation, learning and wonder along the trail, and become an important point of the pilgrimage community, with both regional and local cultural institutions and organisations. The pilgrimage paths will contribute to an increase in cultural collaboration between the European nations.

Food traditions is an important part of our cultural heritage. The Norwegian cuisine is rich and diverse. Food also represents stories of living local communities, about the times they lived in, the nature they operated and the knowledge they gained and utilised. It is this which lays the groundwork for our food traditions, and the pilgrimage trails will be an arena to serve local food directly from the producer.

Through collaboration with schools, kindergartens, congregations and others, the pilgrimage trails will be a platform to impart valuable knowledge and understanding of Norwegian cultural history, Saint Olav's legacy and the history and culture of the Church and the Middle Ages.

#### **MEASURES:**

##### **Strengthen the pilgrimage trails to Trondheim as a Norwegian, Nordic and European cultural heritage**

- Strengthen the sharing of art, culture and cultural heritage
- Maintain local food traditions
- Use the pilgrimage trail as an arena to further and maintain crafts
- Strengthen and Develop «St. Olav Ways» as an European Cultural Route

#### **INDUSTRY**

During the past few years we have registered a big increase in the number of overnight stays and pilgrims on the trails, not to mention the number of Olavs Letters sent out. This shows that the pilgrimage is an area with a lot of potential for expansion and development, especially in local districts. Factors such as nature and culture are important elements which contribute to the increase in tourism in Norway. A sustainable development is essential to establish this industry. A focus on marking hiking trails, establishing businesses, locally produced food, imparting cultural history and experiences of nature and cultural landscapes are important factors in the growth of industry.

"The Pilgrimage trails connects nature and cultural heritage connected to the Middle Ages and the Olav's traditions. The pilgrimage trails therefore support the development of sustainable tourism through increased value creation, productivity and more viable districts."

Source: Government message 19, «Opplev Norge - unikt og eventyrlig»



The tourism industry has a goal of "All of Norway - All Year" and the network of pilgrimage trails has a large potential to mobilise visitors in large parts of the country. Foreign pilgrims in Norway spend an average of 21 days on the journey. This is supposedly of the tourists who stay in Norway the longest and who see the most of our country.

The pilgrimage project will lay the foundations for good local hosts. A host is someone who takes responsibility to see to it that their guest feels welcomed, that they have a good time and that they wish to come back. Along with open churches the overnight accommodations along the trail are what make up the fundamentals of this host role, and this is one of the most important arenas along the trail.

An interconnected chain of overnight accommodations is decisive in the matter offering pilgrims longer stays and journeys, and the pilgrims are dependent on transparency and predictability when it comes to the availability, capacity, price and quality. Collaborating with the hosts along the trails will be one of the primary functions of the regional centers, in close connection with local and regional authorities and regional travel agencies as premise-suppliers for local industry.

## **MEASURES:**

### **Increase the use of the pilgrimage trails to a volume providing the basis of a sustainable industry growth**

- Systemic increase in capacity and quality of overnight accommodations along the trails by building robust networks of commercial industry actors
- Secure good standards of signs, marking and facilitation of the physical trails
- Continuous development of marketing measures, such as digital solutions for activity planning and information sharing
- Develop good tools for counting the number of people using the trails

## **ENVIRONMENT**

The pilgrimage trails are «green» tourism, and together with other initiatives the environmental aspect is a central and important part of the pilgrimage investment, both for the environment, the different actors and the pilgrims themselves.

The national pilgrimage investment project will take into consideration the UN's 10 sustainability principles for tourism, with special focus on:

### **Cultural Wealth**

To respect, further develop, and bring forth the cultural heritage, authentic culture, traditions and distinctions of local communities

### **Clean Environment and Resource Effectiveness**

To minimise tourism industry and tourists' pollution of air, water and land (including noise), as well as to minimise the generation of waste and consumption of non-renewable resources

### **Local control and engagement**

To engage and give power to local communities and interests regarding planning, decision making, taking and development of local tourism

## **Guest Satisfaction, Safety and Experience Quality**

To ensure safe, satisfactory and enriching experiences for all tourists regardless of gender, race, disabilities or other factors.

The Public Health aspect regarding the pilgrimage journey is an important factor for the municipalities' work on the facilitation and availability of the pilgrimage trails locally. The Government wishes to contribute so that more take part in physical activity and outdoor activities, as a source to better health and quality of life.

In the government's message nr. 18, "Friluftsliv", there is expressed a wish that outdoor activities should be prioritised in local communities. In Norway there are today about 2500km with marked pilgrimage trails where large parts go through cities, populated areas and towns. The pilgrimage paths will be included as a possible outdoor activity.

### **MEASURES:**

**Develop the pilgrimage trails gently, to maintain nature, cultural heritage and the environment as best can be done**

- Develop action plans for environmentally friendly solutions in the pilgrimage project work
- Secure the pilgrimage trails against wear and tear by nature
- Facilitate for access to sanitation facilities along the trails
- Facilitate for environmentally friendly person and baggage transport

## **FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE INVESTMENT**

### **DIFFERENTIATION OF PILGRIMAGE TRAILS**

A pilgrimage should be experienced as just as accessible for everyone, regardless of standing, background and motivation. The work must be put forth such that it is clear what common distinctions make a pilgrimage a special and recommendation-worthy experience. Centrally it stands as a historical tradition with a holy destination, but it also includes a living cultural landscape with all its variations, history, nature diversity, cultural heritage, architectural styles and human encounters which only the pilgrimage trails have to offer. In sum, this makes the pilgrimage into something so much more.

So that even more will choose to try the pilgrimage, the experience must be considered as relevant for people today.

NPS will evaluate the practice of approving the pilgrimage trails, and together with central collaborators will work out a system classifying the different trails. This will give room for different levels of facilitation and follow-up, which will be an important indicator for the actors on the different trails and the pilgrims planning and going on their journeys.

The last few years has seen great interest and engagement for new trails and projects which in their starting phases are funded by municipalities, county municipalities, the RA or other sources, which are expected to be followed up on and guided into establishing phases, and approved as official trails at the end of the project phase. NPS also takes a coordinating, marketing and management responsibility after overseeing this.

It is a big challenge to coordinate, maintain and give resources to local and regional engagements for the pilgrimage project, and at the same time balance the resource utilisation to be able to work in a goal-oriented way to further increase quality and capacity.

Gudbrandsdalsleden and St. Olavsleden will consist of investment areas for the pilgrimage work. The already established regional centers will be furthered with state funding. In addition, both the coastal route and Borgleden should be prioritised by way of establishing new regional centers in these areas. This in a strategic perspective as a supplement to existing centers, to strengthen trails that give interntaional connections, and to get synergy effects of local and regional engagement and willingness to take part in future developments.

One condition for the expansion of the network of approved trails in the future will be heave local and regional grounding, strong engagemment and will to take part economically with the building of organisations and infrastructures. With a planning period up to 2037 there should be room for expanding the network of trails throughout the planning period, also for future projects which have not explicitly been mentioned in investments as of today.

## **MEASURES:**

### **Differentiate the pilgrimage trails and make clear the resource allocation and facilitaton**

- Establish a system for classifying the trails
- Develop coordinators for the formation and development of trails
- In partnership with local and regional actors, found regional pilgrim centers on prioritised trails

## **VALUE CREATION THROUGH COOPERATION**

An increase in traffic along the Norwegian pilgrimage trails and a strengthened realisation of the vision of "pilgrim trails as good trails to walk through Norwegian nature and culture, characterised by values grounded in human existence and which opens for inner contemplation" can be achieved by building further upon experiences and competence found in todays pilgrimage network. The success of this is dependent on several centers of interests and collaboration partners who all work towards a common goal.

The area of interest in the pilgrimage project is comprehensive and complex, with regards to geography, professional background and approach, areas of interest and expected level of impact and dividends. To strengthen the future investment NPS has to work on information flow, involvement and collaboration of several levels. NPS will further facilitate for several arenas of competency sharing, role specifications and the exchange of experiences and perspectives.

The regional centers are very distinct actors in this. On one side, NPS is in large part the taskgiver in this relationship, with allocation letters and requirement of reports. On the other, the two entities function as a network of common facilitation of the work and development of investment.

The work done by the RPS' can be divided in two categories; internally with collaborators and partners, and externally with pilgrims and guests. The tasks performed by the regional centers are decisive in securing local and regional grounding and ownership for the investment, the interconnectedness and standardised marking of the trails, open churches, overnight accommodations with predictable standards and availability, and good information flow to pilgrims and tour operators. The collaboration between NPS and the RPS' will be formalised into individual agreements of collaboration.



The county municipalities has a central role in the pilgrimage work as cultural heritages and facilitation of outdoor activities through regional development. When it comes to the establishment and maintenance of trails, the counties play a decisive role and have act with some authority on its development. Counties with trails must have the pilgrimage investment as a subject in their future planning. This is important so that the counties as regional authorities can secure future use and safeguarding of the trails. Coordinating and following up on the municipalities along the trails is also an important task for the counties, with cooperation agreements and task management and delegation between the counties, municipalities and pilgrim centers recommended. The county should be closely coordinating with regional centers and NPS. They are also relevant partners in national and international projects, where the pooling of resources is of special import.

All counties with pilgrim trails must have them in their plans, and on the trails with regional centers there should be information flow between the to on cases regarding or affecting the trail. Municipalities have in large part responsibility for the marking, management and cleaning of the trails in their area, whilst the regional centers follow up on the work in their region with advice, guiding and quality control. It is often volunteer teams or organisations performing these operative tasks on authority of the municipality, which strengthens local ownership and interest for the trails in local communities. The realisation of this is dependent on the mobilisation of volunteer resources.

The contact between RPS and individual municipalities also create opportunities for service offers along the trails through the facilitation of local industry. Municipalities should be advised on the work on the development of the pilgrimage trails to secure an increase in value creation locally.

Good collaboration between landowners will secure a good trail which does not create unnecessary problems, neither for the landowner or the ones using the trail. Landowners must contribute so that changes to the trail happens in cooperation with their municipality. Things such as for setting up grazing fences or managing logging will often affect the trail, and it is important for all parts that one has a running and effective dialogue, especially in the case of generationshifts where new landowners come onto the scene.

Innovation Norway is an important collaborator in the work with local industry along the trails. It's important that collaboration is established regarding branding and profiling the pilgrimage trails as national tourism destinations.

Tourism companies and the tourism industry must also be involved in the development of business projects, hosting-courses for overnight accommodations and sustainable development of the trails as a tourist destination.

## **MEASURES:**

### **Development of statistics and calculation models as a basis for reporting on sustainability and value creation**

- Strengthen information flow and collaboration with central actors
- Collaborate with counties and municipalities about increased industry in relation to the pilgrimage trails
- Further pilgrims in collaboration with different actors and markings

## ORGANISATION AND FINANCING

The traffic of the pilgrim trails has increased continuously since the establishment of today's model with the regional centers and NPS. The number of approved trails has increased and more trails are under evaluation. The future growth has to be organized and financed in line with local and regional goals, financing abilities, capacity potential and availability. The investment must have a base financial backing based on the grants from NPS and communal or county-based financing. In addition with project resources and sales incomes contribute to resources to the work. For counties and municipalities, the use of existing positions and projects can be counted as financing.

NPS will facilitate and coordinate the national investment. NPS will work to better collaboration relations with central actors and contribute towards frameworks giving the organization the best possible prospects for common achievements. NPS will have an overall responsibility also over regional trails which does not fall into the St Olavs Ways network, and will distribute resources for activities on these trails.

NPS will take part in international networks and strengthen relations in the Nordic Countries in close collaboration with the Association for the Cultural Route of St. Olav Ways (ACSOW), which facilitates the status of the trail and an European Cultural Route. Through the international work, and the cultural heritage connected to the Olavs history, there will be a focus on strengthening collaboration with knowledge organisations, culture institutes, museums and other relevant actors with a goal of promoting the pilgrimage trail to Trondheim as one of the most well-known European pilgrimage destinations.

To secure the investment into a new 20-year period, NPS must be allocated resources to handle the development. A strengthening of staff in NPS will give room to maintain the national work and to be a resource for a steadily growing network of trails and centers of interests.

There have been raised questions from differing sources regarding what would be the best way to organize the pilgrimage investment.

The model with regional centers along Gudbrandsdalsleden have seen a steady and even increase in traffic. Together with NPS, the regional centers sit on competency regarding the pilgrimage important for the national investment.

The regional centers got from their establishment and up to the founding of NPS financial grants via their respective dioceses. NPS took over the allocation role from 2013, and the resources meant for the regional centers were for a long time earmarked in the allocation given to NPS. In 2016 this earmarking ceased and the effort will now be directed towards the approved pilgrimage trails.

Seeing as the number of approved trails has increased the financing of the project has grown more and more demanding. This is due to the fact that officially accepted trails are coordinated by the NPS in collaboration with the municipalities relevant to the trail.

The regional centers are independent legal entities, with differing structures and organisations. In keeping with the long term plan work, there has been collected data regarding the financing of individual centers to best evaluate and analyse the financial necessity of each center. It is this work which lays the foundation for the recommendations in the long term plan.

From experience from Via Francigena in Italy and Camino de Santiago in Spain, we know that there has been work done on the development of financial models which can give analyses on the pilgrims' impact on local economies.

New calculation models are of great interest also for the facilitation of the Norwegian trails, because such models can say something about the result we get from the investments. So far we do not have access to such financial models in Norway. Together with the tourism industry, we will take initiative to develop ripple-effect analyzes.

To build a robust entity which can contribute to continued activity growth in pilgrimage traffic, and strengthen the quality of experiences, it is stipulated that annual operational costs per RPS is NOK 2 million. The state financing should set 60% to operational costs, so that each RPS get a yearly subsidy of NOK 1.2 million.

In 2030 Norway we see the national anniversary and the Stiklestad National Culture Center (SNK) has a distinct responsibility regarding this. It is stipulated in two remarks by the Committee of Family and Culture, Innst. 14 S (2015-2016) and (2018-2019) as well as the national budget of 2017.

The Preliminary Study for the National Anniversary 2030 was established by the board of SNK in 2016. The goal with the preliminary study was to formulate a platform and concept for the anniversary in 2030 and create collaboration relations to realise the investment. The study was financed by Trøndelag county, Verdal municipality and SNK. SNK now works on facilitating and coordinating the national anniversary.

The NPS has received signals indicating that it is a wish that NPS take on the responsibility of incorporating pilgrimage in the aforementioned arrangement plans in for the anniversary in 2030. NDR sits in SNK's board-group for the National Anniversary. The State has so far not set by resources towards the anniversary nor the work that has already started in preparation of it. In the long term plan there is weight given to the investment having a clear involvement in and focus on the anniversary in 2030, to further pilgrimage with different actors and measures. This future work will take form in the collaboration with NDR and SNK towards the anniversary.

The Regional Pilgrim Center of Stiklestad must be taken into the state base financing on an equal standing as the regional centers along Gudbrandsdalsleden.

The coastal pilgrimage route was historically seen as the most important and perhaps most used pilgrimage route to Nidaros. To strengthen the unity of the national investment there should be established 4 regional pilgrim centers along the coastal route after the model for Gudbrandsdalsleden.

Borgleden leads through a populous region and the work connected to the development of the trail has generated a lot of good cooperation between the county, church, volunteer groups and the communal link with Olavsbyen Sarpsborg in the lead. In addition, it is bordering Sweden where there is work to establish a marked and facilitated Olavs Way from Gøteborg to the border in Halden.

This development is important for the future development of the trail's status as an European Cultural Route. On Borgleden there is a need for a regional actor who can take responsibility for coordination for work in the area.

## **MEASURES:**

### **Establish models for future growth within the national pilgrimage investment**

- Strengthen staffing at the NPS to balance tasks and capacity
- The establishment of up to 4 regional centers along the coastal pilgrimage route



- Establishment of 1 regional center along Borgleden
- Establishment of coordinators along Østerdalsledene, Romboleden, Nordleden, Tunsbergleden and Valldalsleden
- Incorporate sustainability principles
- Incorporate the Regional Pilgrim Center of Stiklestad in the same finance model as the abovementioned RPS'



**KONGSVOLD LODGE**





## 8.RESOURCE NEED AND STRUCTURE OF GOVERNMENT FUNDING

The pilgrimage traffic has grown steadily since today's model with regional centers and the NPS was established. In addition do we have more trails and a considerably larger number of central collaborators in the investment through several involved actors, and bigger geographical areas for the trails. Counties as regional authorities will ensure future use and management of the trails. Individual municipalities are responsible for marking, managing and cleaning the trails in their area. Three-part agreements on cooperation and delegation of work between counties, municipalities and regional pilgrim centers is from realier experiences an advantage, and is therefore mentioned as a recommendation in the long term plan.

To secure the investment into a new 20-year period, NPS must be allocated resources to handle the development. A strengthening of staff in NPS will give room to maintain the national work and to be a resource for a steadily growing network of trails and centers of interests. NPS has amongst other things allocated project finances for the strengthening of infrastructure along the Gudbrandsdalsleden. These resources have given local value creation, better facilitation for travellers, and economic resources to regional centers. Better capacity at NPS will strengthen opportunities to increase the allocation of resources to national, regional and local measures over the years.

### FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK STATE ALLOCATION NPS

	2013	2014	2015 <sup>1</sup>	2016	2017 <sup>2</sup>	2018	2019
STATE GRANTS	5 300 000	5 335 000	4 835 000	4 627 500	4 744 000	5 009 000	5 098 000
STATE GRANTS RPS	5 490 000	5 682 000	5 682 000	5 682 000	5 700 000	5 800 000	5 940 000
VALUE-CREATING-PROGRAMME RA <sup>3</sup>	1 000 000	1 750 000	1 750 000	1 000 000			
SUMS	11 790 000	12 767 000	12 267 000	11 209 500	10 444 000	10 809 000	11 038 000

2015: <sup>1</sup> Reduction of kr. 450 000 in accordant to the impenentation of nett entry scheme for VAT (accounting reduction from VAT).

2017: <sup>2</sup> NPS under NDR 1.7.16. Estimated reduction in NPS' operating expenses as a result of this is about NOK 700 000.

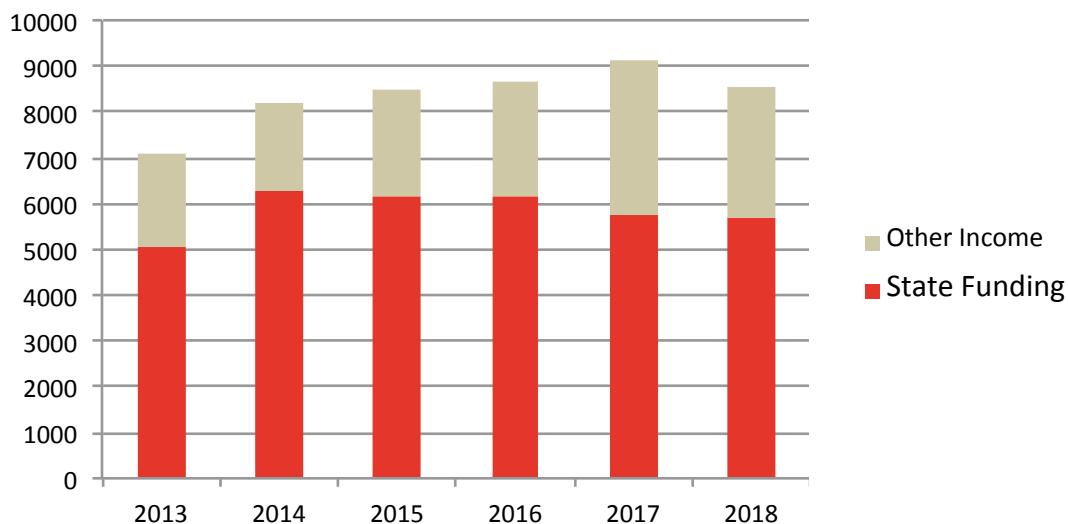
RA 3: Value Creation resources were allocated as an ordinary state grant without earmark



The table shows a decrease in state allocated funding from 12.76 million in 2014 to 11.70 million (including reduction in administrative costs) in 2019. In this period, the earmarker resources of the regional pilgrim centers remained stable, with a small increase during the past three years.

In addition to state funding, NPS has throughout several years received project resources from official and private actors for different culture- and infrastructure initiatives. This has been earmarked resources which have not been put towards ordinary management.

The state funding of the RPS' from 2010 was basically full financing without a requirement regarding local or regional co-financing or any other type of independent generation of income. The tabel underneath shows the collective budget to the regional centers in the period 2013-2018. Here it is evident that the centers have had a substantial amount of additional funding. In addition to the sums in the tabel, individual centers have also gotten the rental costs covered by key partners, which signifies that the actual additional funding is somewhat higher than what is visualised here. The post "Other Incomes" is mainly about sales income, communal and county-based funding and project resources.



These numbers tell us primarily that the state funding has not been substantial enough to operate a regional center. Secondly, we see that state funding makes way for local and regional co-financing and opportunities for independent earning.

The six regional centers have during the last six years had an average annual budget of 1.46 million. To build robust entities that can contribute to a continued increase in traffic and simultaneously strengthen the quality of experiences, it is stipulated that annual operational funds per RPS be 2 million. The state funding should account for 60% of the budget, such that each RPS gets an annual grant of 1.2 million. The table underneath shows the total resource requirement including today's distribution and shows the need for additional funding of about 11.7 million to realise the long term plan.

<b>Pilgrimage Investments Annual Resource Requirements as of 2020:</b>	
<b>Operations NPS, incl. 2 new positions</b>	7,5 mill
RPS Nidaros Pilegrimsgård	1,2 mill
Gudbrandsdalsleden 5 RPS x 1,2 mill	6,0 mill
RPS Stiklestad	1,2 mill
Kystpilegrimsleia 4 RPS 1,2 mill	4,8 mill
<b>Coordinators Østerdalsledene, Romboleden, Nordleden, Tunsbergleden</b>	1,0 mill
<b>Action funds</b>	1,0 mill
<b>SUM</b>	<b>22,7 mill</b>



## 9. MILESTONE PLAN

### 2020 – 2022 – PHASE I

#### **Establish models for future growth within the national pilgrimage investment**

- Strengthen information flow and cooperation with central actors
- Strengthen the staff of NPS to balance work and capacity
- Establishment of regional centers along the coastal pilgrimage route
- Establishment of regional centers along Borgleden
- Establishment of coordinators along Østerdalsleden, Romboleden, Nordleden, Tunsbergleden and Valldalsleden
- Incorporate sustainability principles
- Incorporate the Regional Pilgrim Center of Stiklestad as a state funded center

#### **Differentiate the pilgrimage trails and clarify resource allocation and facilitation**

- Establish a system for the classification of pilgrimage trails
- Develop coordinators for the creation and development of pilgrimage trails
- Strengthen and expand «St. Olav Ways» as an European Cultural Route

### 2022 – 2027 – PHASE II

#### **Increased use of pilgrimage trails to a volume enough to sustain local industry**

- Systematic improvement of capacity and quality of overnight accommodations along the trail through the construction of robust networks of commercial industry
- Coordinate with municipalities and counties regarding increased industry around the pilgrimage trails
- Ensure good standards of signage, markings and facilitation of the physical trails
- Continuous development of marketing strategies such as digital solutions to trip planning and information sharing
- Develop good tools for the collection of data on the total use of the pilgrimage trails, and develop statistics as a basis for reporting on sustainability and value creation

#### **Maintain the ecclesiastical grounding, renew pilgrimage traditions and be open to and inclusive of people of different faiths, culture, traditions and motivations.**

- Increase the number of open churches along the trail
- Build a clear profile as a pilgrimage destination for people today
- Facilitate for the sending off and reception of pilgrims in churches along the trail
- Collaborate with professional circles of and related to the church regarding the renewal of pilgrimage traditions
- Promote the holy space as a space for all pilgrims and create dialogue between the world's faiths



### 2027 – 2032 – PHASE III

**Develop the Pilgrimage trails carefully to preserve nature, cultural heritage and the environment in the best way possible.**

- Develop an action plan for environmentally friendly solutions during the project
- Protect the pilgrimage trails against wear and tear
- Facilitate for access to sanitation facilities along the trail
- Facilitate for environmentally friendly transport of bags and people

**Strengthen Pilegrimsleden – St. Olavsveiene to Trondheim as a Norwegian, Nordic, and European cultural heritage**

- Strengthen the sharing of art, culture and cultural heritage
- Preserve local food traditions
- Utilize the pilgrimage trail as an arena to promote and preserve various crafts
- Lift up the modern pilgrimage phenomenon

### 2032 – 2037 – PHASE IV

**Pilgrimage Investment after the National Anniversary**

- Develop new national strategies for pilgrimage investment
- Further documentable results as input to a new cultural message



ØSTERDALSLEDEN

# SUBMITTED CONSULTATION RESPONSES

## MUNICIPALITIES - 14

Grong municipality  
Norddal municipality  
Sarpsborg municipality  
Oppdal municipality  
Hitra municipality  
Åmot municipality  
Selje and joint commission for Eid and Selje  
Averøy municipality  
Stjørdal municipality  
Verdal municipality  
Levanger municipality  
Frosta municipality  
Smøla municipality  
Bergen municipality

## REGIONAL PILEGRIM CENTER - 5

Oslo RPS  
Nidaros Pilegrimgård  
Hamar RPS  
Stiklestad RPS  
Dovrefjell RPS

## **DIOCESAN COUNCIL AND THE CHURCH - 11**

Tunsberg diocesan council  
Nidaros diocesan council  
Stavanger diocesan council  
Oslo diocesan council  
Bjørgvin diocesan council  
Hamar diocesan council  
Biskopen i Sør-Hålogaland  
Agder og Telemark diocesan council  
Borg diocesan council  
Møre diocesan council  
The Church of Norway  
w/the Council of Churches

## **FYLKER OG REGIONRÅD - 9**

Akershus county municipality  
Trøndelag county municipality  
Vestfold county municipality  
Sogn and Fjordane county municipality  
Hedmark county municipality  
Møre and Romsdal county municipality  
Helgeland Regional Council  
Oppland county municipality  
Nordland county municipality

## **ORGANISATIONS AND NETWORKS , AND OTHERS - 11**

The Pilgrim Community of Saint Sunniva  
The Pilgrim Community of St. Thomas in Valdres  
The Pilgrimage Association of St. Hallvard of Huseby  
The Pilgrim Community of St. Jakob  
Østerdalsledene  
Areopagos  
The Pilgrim Community of Sta. Maria  
The Pilgrim Community of St. Hallvard, Oslo  
The Pilgrim Community of St. Olav, Trh  
The Pilgrimage trail to Røldal  
The RiHaTo Pilgrim Community

## **MUSEUMS - 1**

Stiklestad National Culture Center

## **OTHERS - 1**

Interreg Green Pilgrimage project



# SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES TO THE LONG TERM PLAN FOR PILGRIMAGE INVESTMENT

## **In General**

Several have commented on the structure of the document, but the structure of the consultation document has shown itself to be useful for several reasons. Not all consultative bodies know the pilgrimage project equally well, so an in-depth informative response regarding background, development, statistics and finances has the purpose of spreading knowledge of both the past and present situation. In addition, the input regarding the reorganisation of NPS, the prioritization of pilgrimage trails and distribution of regional centers generated reflection and, at times, provocation.

All in all, we are of the belief that this has had a positive effect on the engagement of consultative bodies, as evident by the amount of responses.

In the revision after the consultation round, we now place weight on balancing the background material against suggestions made to the long term plan in addition to formulating the plan as a public instrument rather than an input or draft.

## **Organisation and Roles**

The majority saw today's organisation role distribution as somewhat unclear and call for a clarification of this. When it comes to the organization of the NPS as its own administrative body, there is widespread support of this in the consultation responses, precisely because there is an understanding this will clarify responsibilities and authority.

Trøndelag county municipality has in their response decided not to take a stand on the final organisation of NPS, before the question is explored further. Even though the majority of the consultation responses support the original idea to establish NPS as its own administrative body, a further exploration regarding the question would give both time to evaluate alternative models and to secure sufficient grounding for a future organisation. The board of NDR has evaluated the order from the Ministry of Culture where a report on the organisation of NPS is decided not to belong in the long term planning of the pilgrimage investment project.

## **Culture**

The cultural aspect of the pilgrimage investment is a topic attracting a lot of attention because it opens for all kinds of actors. It is also an area where counties and municipalities especially are engaged both on a local and regional level by way of cultural institutions, arrangements and schools.

Hedmark county have put heavy emphasis on the importance of culture in the pilgrimage investment and call for a larger focus on culture in the long term plans. In the revised plan work has gone into the wording, and this is an area it is worth it to reflect on.

## **The Church**

The Church has embraced the pilgrimage investment and expresses interest in taking on a clearer role. What is especially emphasised is the Church's commitment to ecumenical thinking. This is clarified in the revised plan.

## **Synergy**

The collaboration between the many actors and key partners is by many highlighted as a natural boon. It is undoubtedly valuable to coordinate projects and competency towards a common goal. It is noted upon in the long term plan, but is not concretized.

## **Financing**

The subjects of organisation and financing are combined in the revised version. Many have expressed thoughts on the number of regional centers, their locations and financing. We observe clear tendency of the consultation responses to in large part reflect both local and regional wishes and requirements. Example wise, we see that arguments against using money on the coastal route is due to most of the consultation responses wishing instead to use the money on their own trails and plans. It is worth to note that arguing for the aforementioned prioritisations are important in this context, and the revised long term plan we have made an attempt to support and take this into account.

Most counties comment on the proposed financial model of a 60/20/20 division between state, county and municipality. Unclearness surrounding the the regional reforms and merging of counties has led to several counties choosing to wait with expressing a firm opinion on the model. At the same time, there has been expressed a wish for them to be involved in processes where this is being discussed. The main trend sees counties with established pilgrimage trails and regional centers are more hesitant to make any commitments to co-financing than counties where the long term plan details future expansions of the operative network.

## **Additionally**

Pilgrim reception is of some highlighted as a point which should be focused on in the long term plan, without elaborating on or giving suggestions about what a pilgrim reception is or how it should be organised. When it comes to pilgrim receptions, we are interested in statistics, but for the pilgrim it is important to be recieved properly, to maintain the calmness, the opportunities for sharing and reflection, and the experiences they had during their pilgrimage. A pilgrim reception has to be developed over time, and can thus naturally be made mention of in the long term plan, but it also falls naturally into today's work.

Volunteering is also something commented on by some consultation responses. Mostly because the volunteer work will be considered a part of the pilgrim community and thus a part of the base funding of the project. It is necessary to take a clear stand on volunteer work in the pilgrimage investment, and NPS has to make an effort to provide them with specified tasks, to support them with grants when there is room for it, and to acknowledge the value that volunteer work gives the project.

The subject of universal design is touched upon by very few. The Church has called attention to the necessity of making it clear that the pilgrimage experience is for everyone and appeals to the significance of ecumenism. But is the pilgrimage for everyone? The question remained a little in the air after the consultation responses were reviewed. We have stretches that are virtually universal in their design, but mainly in populated areas or cities. Here there should be enough basis to do more, in consultation with relevant competency environments.

Trondheim, 13.12.19

Hans Morten Løvrød /Project Leader





[www.pilegrimsleden.no](http://www.pilegrimsleden.no)

Version: 13.12 2019