



STUDY TOUR - TRONDHEIM

During the second week of September, the first study tour was organised. Within the frame of this trip a small group of Hungarian professionals in the field of social- and elderly care visited a number of specialised facilities in and around Trondheim, Norway.

Trondheim was selected as an omnipotent destination for numerous reasons. On one hand the third largest city of Norway and its immediate and broader vicinity offers an excellent setting for visiting a wide range of different institutions and facilities in the field of elderly care. The big city setting obviously differs from the rural areas in terms of many aspects as well as the challenges associated with these geographical constraints. Another reason for choosing Trondheim was, that the donor partner's, SINTEF's headquarters is located here that made it convenient on one hand to initiate a small progress meeting as well as that the primary contact, Mr Joe Gorman, senior researcher was able to reach out to the heads of the target institutions via his extensive and broad professional network and was able to secure the sites to be thoroughly visited and understood by the delegation.

The visit took up a total of 4 calendar days, first of which was spent on getting to Trondheim, given the late departure of the scheduled flight in the late afternoon on the 12th September. The following two days the team visited 3 elderly care and 1 health care facility, that differed from each other by a great deal in terms of their size, the number of people served, the age of the buildings etc. But in one important aspect all of them were quite the same, namely the level of services available for the nursed elderly was almost identical. Whether the facility located one hour ferry-ride from Trondheim on the far side of a wide fjord and another 80 minutes long car-ride away from

the port or right in the middle of one of the fastest developing neighbourhood of Trondheim, there were no fundamental differences in terms of the local conditions and the available equipment of elderly care between them.

In Norway, ultimately due to one of the highest living standards you may experience in the world, elderly care had been developed on the basis of health related needs rather than – similarly to Hungary – being based on other social needs (eg. insufficient income to cover for the most basic needs etc) as well. Norway also faces the problem of an ever ageing population, thus the waiting lists to get admitted into such a facility (even with the mentioned limitations in place) are quite long.



The Hungarian delegation accompanied by the head of the Ladeslatta Institute, Ms Karine Lee Blomstrøm in one of the rooftop gardens of the facility

Thus there is more and more emphasis put on to use technology for the well being of the elderly at his/her home (in a familiar environment) and to allow them to take care of themselves (in a supervised and controlled manner from their health perspective) as long as they are able to.

The Ladesletta Elderly home, is the latest, most modern and best equipped health and elderly care facility in Trondheim. It serves many functions and provides a number of services (library, cafeteria, hairdresser, chiropodist etc) related to the comfort and well being of those who live there. It has 76 permanent residents and a total number of 120 staff taking care of them. It cooperates with numerous city initiatives such as the local Red Cross, volunteer groups, bikers' club, elementary and secondary schools, kindergartens etc.



The building of the Malvik facility meets nearly Zero Energy Standards



A range of smart devices ease the daily life of the nurses and the inhabitants too

The technical infrastructure features the latest gadgets and equipment that are meant to ease the work of the staff (smart devices for daily task distribution and follow-up, key cards, smart doors, building integrated positioning system) and improve the notion of safety (fall detectors, motion sensors, wrist-band alarm devices etc) for all the residents

The next facility visited (VikhammerHelsetun) is located outside Trondheim in a small neighbouring community called, Malvik. The building is also a recent built (commissioned in 2014), meeting nearly zero energy standards. Generally speaking it serves almost a same purpose as the Ladesletta institute, but on a much smaller scale, designed to suit and respond to the local needs. The approach of the staff and the technical equipment used is also identical to its big city counterpart

The following day was to cover more rural communities whose setting is more similar to the setup of many small farms surrounding Morahalom. The aim was to get some impressions about how the basic standards (that are quit high) can be maintained farther out from a major city, like Trondheim.

The communities visited can be accessed on road by an over 4 hour drive one way, or by ferries across the fjord (about 1 hour). In emergency situations a helicopter can cover the distance in 30 minutes or so.

The Fosen facility was not much about the elderly care per se, but more like a regional health care institute for the locals, similar to a polyclinic, but with a more advanced range of equipments. It is the living example of the realisation that on the long run it is far cheaper to keep the population safe and treat locally and if needed perform smaller-scale surgeries and rely on specialist treatment in a hospital only if the local capacities proves insufficient to deal with the issue. The Fosen institute covers almost all the aspects of healthcare with trained staff that have the ability to consult with specialist via video conference should a less straight forward case would emerge.



The Fosen facility was built in the 1970s, yet it perfectly serves its many functions

Their surgical ward is well equipped to carry out standard procedures and the hospital in Trondheim is only 30 minutes away by chopper as a last resort. It is clear that even at farther distances can be short cut by the use of modern technology and despite the geographical distance there are ways of providing the same quality of service as you were a resident of a bigger city. As a matter of fact there is a law in Norway ensuring the citizens' access to the same level of healthcare and elderly care services regardless whether the resident lives in the busy SE region of the country or at the far north, beyond the Arctic Circle.



The picturesque Åfjord village

The last destination of the study trip was the small, very rural village of Åfjord, over an hour drive from the Fosen facility. Although the distance travelled might have given you the impression that we are about to leave civilisation behind (sparse population, wild scenery) this institution also met all the standards that were observed earlier during the trip.

The size of the facility covering the local demand in terms of elderly care and it offers more, since the building hosts a "virtual" kindergarten too. This means that the children spend their days outside in the vicinity of the building (playground, sandbox etc) and they are only inside when they eat or need to visit the restrooms. By effectively "integrating" the kindergarten into the elderly home the system facilitates interaction between these two generations for the benefit of both sides at the same time.

You may read more about the professional impressions of the study tour on the [project website](#) by downloading the summary available there in English and Hungarian.

CONSTRUCTION WORKS HAS COMMENCED

After finalizing the rather lengthy public procurement procedure to select the contractor for the building, the foundations of the community centre were laid in late August. The late summer weather was in favour of the works and September saw nice progress in delivering the building. The construction is on schedule and the structure is expected to be having roof by the end of 2016.



The building of the community house progresses per the original plans

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