



### The Hardangervidda national park – home to Norway's largest tribe of wild reindeer

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THEMATIC SEMINAR

STEERING COMMITTEE  
MEETING 6

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BERGEN

NORWAY

## Norway's focus on public health, innovation in tourism and nature management

*In connection with the ASCENT Steering Committee's 6th and final meeting, a thematic seminar was arranged for the group. The focus on the seminar was split three ways. Public health is a key focus area in Norway and compared with many other countries, we are advanced in how we incorporate public health into every aspect of the public sector's areas of responsibility.*

While public health measures include aspects tied to education, physical and mental health, inclusion and more, the presentation focused on the way Hordaland county council supports initiatives that promote an active lifestyle. Norway's outdoor law and the public right to access is the basis for the way Norwegians view the landscape we live in and the Norwegian mountain code outlines your duty to behave responsibly to stay safe. The Gjensidige signposting project has led to a standardised signposting system throughout Norway, with trails both in nature and in urban areas signposted

and marked according to length and degree of difficulty.

Dag Aksnes from the cluster organisation for tourism, NCE Tourism, discussed the importance of putting a value on untouched nature. When central government considers the pros and cons of installing irreversible measures such as power lines or windmill farms in mountain areas, the cost benefit analysis does not take into consideration the value of leaving nature untouched. NCE Tourism is now in dialogue with the Norwegian ministry for climate and the environment to address this issue. NCE

Tourism also has a partnership with NCE Media, who gave a presentation on their beacon technology which can be used to track hikers and for monitoring purposes.

The final speaker presented Hordaland county council's ongoing work with the Hardangervidda national park and efforts to protect the wild reindeer tribe that resides in the area. Keeping hikers away from the breeding grounds of the reindeer is of paramount importance and the issues relating to balancing the interests of hikers and managing the tribe are complex.

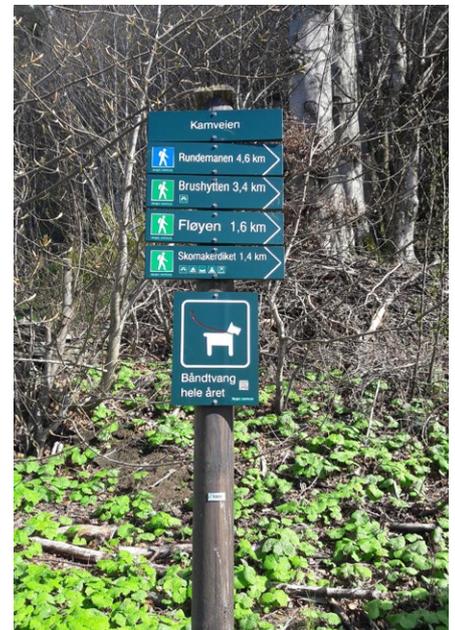
# Outcome

20 people attended the seminar and presentations and contact details were circulated to the group afterwards. The presentations from the seminar sparked conversations in the group afterwards as to how new ideas for

cooperation and mutual exchange of learning could be taken further. At this late stage in the project, it might be difficult to launch new initiatives but there may be options for post ASCENT cooperation.



**Vidden: The mountain playground on the doorstep of Bergen's town centre**



## Key Findings & Learning Points

Finding a good balance between the need to protect the environment on the one side, yet allowing people to use nature for recreational purposes, is an important debate where it is difficult to find a good answer.

As the number of visitors who are looking for outdoor adventures increases, the need to be prepared in order to handle the effects of the tourism is stronger.

Close cooperation between tourism organisations, conservation bodies and commercial organisations is necessary to form a coherent approach to how we wish to use our landscapes in a sustainable manner.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

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