

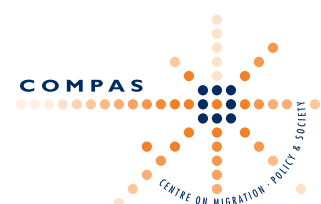


Action for Inclusion in Europe City Working Groups

Cohesion and Belonging

Rethink Trige –
A Modern Village

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Context

Aarhus is the second largest city in Denmark, in the region of Midtjylland (Central Jutland), with a population of around a third of a million. Trige is a small village north of Aarhus with approx. 3200 inhabitants. One third of Trige's inhabitants live in a social housing area called "Trigeparken". The other two thirds live in single-family homes surrounding Trigeparken. Trigeparken is characterized as a disadvantaged area with a majority of residents on social benefits, a high degree of unemployment and a low level of education. Just over a third of the residents are migrants or from migrants families from non-Western countries

One of the major challenges for local associations and institutions is the division between the two diverse neighbourhoods: Trigeparken and the surrounding area. In recent years a "them and us" culture has evolved and an invisible cultural border divides the village and affects cohesion between the groups. It is in particular difficult to engage the inhabitants of Trigeparken in projects not involving their own residential area, and vice versa difficult to engage the people living in the rest of the village in projects concerning Trigeparken. In fact, different groups with the same objectives operate in Trige, but do not coordinate enough because they represent two different neighbourhoods and two different groups of people.

This division has been on the agenda for several years, not least in the context of the school and other local institutions. This has resulted in work to counter the challenge; however, the task is complicated and requires extra attention. One of the key points of the locally based development plan is a change from "them and us" to "we" in Trige.



Brief Description of Action Plan and objectives

The project focus is to meet the challenges of cohesion in Trige. It is necessary to rethink civic participation and active citizenship to break down barriers between neighbourhoods in the village. The main objective is to create a common feeling of pride in the village and promote participation, local ownership and understanding in the local community. The project will facilitate creation of both permanent and temporary cultural "monuments" that will help create a common feeling and "brand" the village in a positive way.

The overall objective is to create a "Cultural path" in Trige. The community will develop 4-5 cultural projects, which will connect the various parts of the village. The aim of these is to secure a connection between the residents across age, gender, ethnicity and address in the village.

The various sub-projects are embedded in the following overall objectives:

- Local residents, in collaboration with potential professional partners, will design the different projects.
- The execution of the projects will happen in cooperation with local residents.
- The projects must be for the benefit of a wide range of residents in Trige - especially with a focus on local ownership.
- The project must create pride and joy of living in Trige.
- The project must include a large differentiated resident group.

The current proposal of the "Cultural path" is as follows:

- The creation of a village landmark in the local park.
- A motor and sensory experience course in Trigeparken: A challenge course aimed at children and young people.
- The modernization of the recreational area "Bærmoseskoven".
- The creation of a local choir. With the help of professionals, the choir will participate in the local cultural festival in 2017.
- Expanding the scope of the annual Children's Culture Festival.



How is this different?

Project "Rethink the village" is the first time a broad group of interest from a wide spectrum of Trige initiates a long-term strategy to improve the self-image, the co-creative citizenship and the interest and understanding of the differ-

ent cultures in the village. Previously no one has attempted to rally institutions, private associations, housing associations, businesses, Aarhus municipality and other stakeholders in culture projects with an aim to improve cohesion, cooperation and the general public interest in the village of Trige.



Timing

Event	Date
Application Aarhus 2017	18-12-2015
Invitation: Stakeholder meeting	29-01-2016
Meeting, Action for Inclusion	26-01-2016
Outline: Stakeholder meeting	18-03-2016
Stakeholder meeting	21-04-2016
Creation of Project Groups	13-05-2016
Evaluation of Projects	29-09-2016
Inauguration planning	24-10-2016
Culture Festival, Trige 2017	2017

The long-term milestone is “Aarhus 2017 – European Capital of Culture”, in which Trige are taking part of.

Consultation and achievements

The core activities of the action plan in the period of the Action for Inclusion initiative were a series of events reaching out to residents using a variety of engagement approaches.

- **Keyholders**

We started by collecting data on key persons in the local area, and a list of board members in different associations, volunteers and other active resource persons in the local area was used to create awareness. Key persons and stakeholders represented associations, councils, homeowners' associations, the local council, student council, and a few resource persons. Identifying key persons – or “keyholders” – was a vital step in understanding the dynamics of local leadership and local engagement, and making sure that these keyholders played an active part in designing and implementing the action plan was understood as central to building local ownership of the work before reaching out to engage the wider resident population.

- **Workshop – cultural innovation in Trige**

All Trige citizens were invited to an innovation workshop via bulletin, website and Facebook. Moreover, local key persons and stakeholders was separately invited. This happened through phone calls and in person. The intention was to widen engagement beyond the key persons, and create ownership and responsibility among citizens and stakeholders, as well as to retain and develop thoughts and ideas on project activities.

- **The meeting – method “art of hosting”**

Forty-five individuals and a number of children representing the youth club and student council participated in the innovation workshop. The “Art of Hosting” participatory leadership process was used, a process focused on making sure everyone feels heard and which made sure that the residents themselves made the decision about which ideas to take forward.¹

In advance, key projects were selected which had a broad local support. Each project had assigned a local mentor and a local association – an important aspect, if the project would have to succeed. Furthermore, each project had a start-up plan drafted.

On arrival, the participants spread among several smaller tables, with seating for up to six people. The allocation intended to create as differentiated groups as possible.

1. Inspiration Round: There were instructions distributed on the tables. Participants explained what they thought was good about living in Trige, and they discussed new initiatives and changes that they would like see in the village
2. Innovation Round: Participants switched table. One person from each table stayed to inform the new group about ideas and input. The new group had to continue the development of these ideas. Then they had to prioritize ideas after which they would like to continue working on.
3. Development Round: Ideas with the highest priority were distributed at each table and participants placed themselves by interest. Finally, five ideas had the greatest interest. Then participants had to choose one selected idea and explain how they personally could contribute to the further development.
4. Implementation Round: Participants in each group found a coordinator, an association responsible for the process and described a start-up plan.

¹ <http://www.artofhosting.org/>

The five projects agreed on

Although the original conception was to focus on arts and culture, the clear demand from the residents who engaged in the process was to foreground sport and leisure activities alongside this. This will mean that the “cultural trail” will be more integrated with the concrete interests and desires of local people. Developing ideas from the bottom up, rather than imposing an idea of culture from above, will better enable local ownership, which will be critical to the success of the project.

1. "Youth to youth". Based on the local youth club, a group of young people will be coordinators of activities and events in Trige. The activities address young local residents, and members of the youth club will act as role models to other young people in Trige - making possible different layers of involvement – workers, volunteer role models, and the wider youth population. The project will also be responsible for a number of actions. The first is to re-introduce the “Rap-academy”, which was a huge success a few years ago in Trige.
2. "Volunteer leader training". With the local scout association as coordinator, the plan is to offer volunteer leader training for all students in the 7th grade at the local school. At the same time, a plan is created of how the various associations can accept and implement the youth leaders in their association. This will ensure that the young leaders will feel welcome and valued in different kinds of civic associations, and open up the latter to a wider cross-section of the local population.
3. "Fusion sport". The coordinator will be the local sports club. There is a strong desire from the area's youth (and in particular from girls and young women from minority ethnic backgrounds) for the development of “alternative” sports, some of which are available in downtown Aarhus but not previously locally. This corresponds to local wishes dealing with welfare, well-being, and unity through different physical activities. The activities will go beyond “normal sports” (the conventional mainstream sports which are already supported in the area and which reach more mainstream youth) with greater focus on fun and surprising elements than on results and performances. The objective is to create an offer of a range of sports locally, which will activate and enable a wider range of people, male and female, of different cultural backgrounds.
4. "Chess club". A local resident chess enthusiast will be coordinator in cooperation with the local sports club. Earlier this year the local school had great success with their chess program in cooperation with the nursing home, opening up positive intergenerational contact and combating the isolation of older people. Based on the school chess program, there has been an increasing interest to establish a local club.
5. "Fruit and berry plantation". The coordinator is one of the local homeowners' associations in cooperation with the kindergarten. In the middle of Trige there is a large green area, which is never used. The plan is to establish a fruit and berry plantation, which local institutions will take care off for the enjoyment of all Trige residents. Again, intergenerational contact should result from this, and the greater integration of kindergarten parents (especially mothers) with local associational life.

Achievement

So far, the local action plan has run as planned. We managed to involve local key persons in the process and create ownership for the further development. It is obvious that there is strong support from local stakeholders to develop new initiatives. Working closely and intensively with “keyholders” and then working with them to engage the wider

communities in the area has been a key element of success and part of the model that could be replicated elsewhere. Feedback from the recent “development day” has been good, and it is clear what the needs in Trige are and what the further process should contain. The project has a clear advantage with designated coordinators who has personal ownership for the various projects.

Furthermore, we have tested an innovative engagement process with great success, in combination with more traditional community development approaches. At the meeting, residents rotated between projects and developed different ideas, with different perspectives, in a genuine dialogue. Using the “art of hosting” method, the meeting process enhanced the concept of the finished project. Participants left the meeting feeling empowered to take leadership on resident-generated projects, and, crucially, with a clear sense of what comes next, who is coordinator and where the project will end. However, it is still too early to conclude whether the action plan has succeeded and what the result will be.



Challenges

There is still unresolved funding for most of the projects. For the three "big" culture projects, partial funding is in place, but for the five new projects funding is unclear. Furthermore, it is unclear how much funding the new projects need to be realized, and where the money will be found. This could potentially be the biggest obstacle, but the overall project is still awaiting applications from foundations and local pools. If funding becomes a problem, we may need to modify projects so they can be implemented for a reduced amount or perhaps entirely without funds.

Further plans

We expect that we can stay on schedule as it is. We have a strong focus on the actions we develop is permanent and at the same time we hope that the integration of local key persons can contribute to the local foundation and development of the work and of integration and cohesion work more broadly.



Update: March 2017

1. Youth to youth.

- Since November, a group of young people in Trige have been in the process of starting their own business in cooperation with young entrepreneurs from Aarhus University. In addition to starting their own business, the group of young people also focus on involving other young people in the process and creating an entrepreneurial environment for young people in Trige.

2. Volunteer leader training.

- A month ago, a group of nearly 45 young people from Trige and surroundings went to a conference center to be trained as volunteer leaders. The course was planned in cooperation with local associations and its planned that the young people attend for one more weekend course before they start their volunteer work in the various voluntary associations here in Trige.

3. Fusion sports.

- It has been decided in the fusion sport group that they will try to establish a skating park in Trige. There is a large group of young people who participate in this type of sports, but lack a place to pursue their interest. They are working in cooperation with local companies, associations and a group of interested citizens about the establishment of the park. The goal is to open the park in August 2017.

4. Chess club

- Is established and plays chess once a week. So far there are about 14 participants each time.

5. Fruit and berry plantation

- Has not yet been established, but the group is still working on the project.



