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// a transdisciplinary, cross-scale collaboration between national design institutions and local planning authorities  
 // urban transformation process treating city as learning lab

# A Citylab for urban development in Haugesund



In 2010, Norsk Form – a national Norwegian design-oriented institution whose mission is to increase awareness of design, architecture, location, and urban development – launched the Bylab (CityLab) program. This laboratory for urban development formed part of the first Norwegian architectural policy and the government's Architecture Policy Action Plan, known as Arkitektur.Nå Architecture.Now). At the time, Arkitektur.Nå explained the program this way: "The Bylab will work for an inclusive local environment by heightening the knowledge and awareness of the municipalities, especially regarding children/young and elderly in urban and urban development".

Several municipalities participated in a competition to become a Bylab city; Haugesund was among six selected. Bylab cities were expected to engage skilled professionals to explore issues that needed attention, using a practice-based, rather than a scientific research approach. Bylab was a testbed. Participants were asked to experiment and try out new methods.

The Bylab cooperation gave Norsk Form an opportunity to share experiences; other cities also could gain inspiration from the six selected municipalities. To participate in Bylab entailed sharing knowledge.

Four years after Bylab started, in 2014, Norsk Form merged with a second national design-oriented institution, the Norwegian Design Council, charged with encouraging good product design and innovation as a means to build Norway's international design reputation and improve its product sales. That merger established a new state-controlled foundation, Design and Architecture Norway (DOGA).

DOGA, interested in seeing the results of the Bylab proposals, decided to continue working with Haugesund through 2020. DOGA's role involves providing professional advice and support, e.g. linking Haugesund to partners, reference groups, or other DOGA networks, tailored to three jointly agreed-on tasks:

***Task I: Implement European 11's area regulation for Flotmyr, an area of Haugesund that does not have a good major road connecting it with the city alone.***

European is an ideas competition bringing together European cities and young (under 40) urban and architectural design professionals. Each competition period spans two years, involves over 50 European cities and more than 2000 project teams. The entries are judged by national juries composed of specialists in the architecture and urban planning fields. European Norway – a non-profit foundation – was founded



Risøybroa. The city of Haugesund is spread over several islands, connected by bridges. The absence of ferry connections contributes to the fact that the city is mainly car-based.



Historical wooden housing stock is of a radically different scale compared to the adjacent modern road infrastructure and shipyard buildings.

in 2003 to organise European competitions in Norway. The board consists of members representing all Norwegian schools of landscape architecture, planning and architecture, together with the National Association of Norwegian Architects (NAL) and Design and Architecture, Norway (DOGA). The European competition serves a dual purpose: it offers cities and developers new and innovative solutions to local urban planning and development, and provides an opportunity for young architects to get commissions by presenting new ideas. Haugesund decided to participate in European as a means to improve Flotmyr's connection with the city centre.

***Task II: Explore closer, car-free connections to Haugesund centre for residents of the islands in the Smedasundet and northern part of Karmøy, e.g. by establishing an electric ferry.***

In 2017 Haugesund municipality was granted 250.000 Nkr to clarify whether it is realistic to establish an electric ferry connecting the mainland, the city islands and the big island Karmøy outside Haugesund. The Norwegian coast, with its many deep and narrow fjords, is well adapted for ferries, and in many places they play a central role in how citizens move around as part of their everyday life. The Norwegian Directorate of Public Roads predicts that by 2022 Norway will have 70 electric ferries. For Haugesund, an infrastructure of connecting electric ferries will help

maintain sustainable urban development, making the city less dependent on cars and boosting cycling and walking.

***Task III: Study two very distinct adjacent urban site conditions on the island of Risøy in Smedasundet, between Karmøy and Haugesund, considered part of Haugesund city centre:*** A vastly elevated shipyard Aibel (Haugesund's foremost workplace) stands side by side with listed wooden house architecture. We wanted to examine the interface between these two situations and explore how they could be merged in a plan benefitting both situations. While it's unfortunate that Haugesund did not enrol in European 15 (focused on productive cities) to pursue this study, they may join European 16 to explore the border area between the wooden housing and the shipyard.

DOGA has played a relatively minor part in this process; Haugesund's planning authorities are highly skilled, and the city must take credit for initiating and realising its positive development. Building up cities with sustainable urban environments takes time. In Haugesund it looks like the political will is solid enough to maintain momentum on this effort, even beyond the next local election.



The Aibel shipyard has both an engineering office and a world-class yard in Haugesund. The yard area is situated at Risøya. It includes the towering North Sea Hall – a city landmark. The yard takes on a wide number of assignments related to overhauling, upgrading and classing of ships and rigs.