



Nord-Jæren, Norway

Nord-Jæren region is located on the western coast of Norway. Stavanger is the regional capital with about 250,000 inhabitants, including adjacent municipalities. The city of Stavanger is Norway's fourth largest city by population with 119,000 inhabitants.

Why was urban road user charging introduced in Nord-Jæren?

The goal of the Nord-Jæren package was to facilitate a coordinated development of the transport system in the region with regard to all modes. The toll system was set up to co-finance this package with as low a burden as possible for the inhabitants. In addition some revenue will also be used to improve the local environment and liveability of the area.

What are the features of the Nord-Jæren scheme?

The toll system of the Nord-Jæren package has a regional profile in the sense that the toll plazas are dispersed over the entire region.

The initially 17 plazas were placed on the major roads in the region on the borders of the municipalities. One goal was that within all municipalities no one should

pay to get to the centre of the municipality. The location of the toll plazas was not water tight. In some places it was possible to make detours to avoid the toll. To cope with this, some new plazas were established. Currently, 21 toll plazas are in operation.

All toll plazas are fully automated with the use of the AutoPASS system. Initially, fares were differentiated over the day. At weekends and on weekdays from 18.00-6.00 no fee applied. The maximum fee of 10NOK (€1.20) for small vehicles applied from 7.00-9.00 and from 14.00-17.00. At other times, half the fee applied. The most frequent users could get a maximum 50% discount of the fares above. Due to unexpectedly low revenue, the fare differentiation was removed in 2005. Now, tolls must be paid 24 hours a day all year round including weekends and holidays. Drivers will only be charged for one trip per hour and there is a maximum payment of 75 trips per month for users of the AutoPass system. Furthermore, trips from home to the centre of one's own municipality are free of charge.

How was the Nord-Jæren scheme implemented?

The Nord-Jæren toll ring started its operation in April 2001, a decade after the other main toll rings in Norway. However, local discussions of a toll ring had been going



on since the mid 1980s, but never gained the necessary political support. The Nord-Jæren package was established despite the lack of political support from two of the municipalities in the region. The other three municipalities, including the city of Stavanger, and the county council supported the package.

The main driver behind the Nord-Jæren package as well as the other Norwegian urban toll packages has been the lack of public funds to finance infrastructure, both road and public transport. This has been facilitated by the long tradition of using tolls as an alternative source of revenue. Local acceptance has been a guiding principle. One of the important drivers for the package was the opportunity to finance improvements in local rail using the toll revenue.

Conclusion

The goal of the Nord-Jæren package was to facilitate a coordinated development of the transport system in the region with regard to all modes. Focus has been on improving the environmentally friendly modes first and road infrastructure thereafter. Due to increased costs, some important projects have not been completed. Currently, plans for a second Nord-Jæren package are considered. The plans are to further improve the public transport network in addition to road infrastructure. The use of revenue to operate public transport is also being considered.

The Nord-Jæren charging region

