

# 'Historic Wooden Towns in the Nordic Countries and NW-Russia'

January 2019 – October 2021

Co-financed by the Nordic Council of Ministers

## Aim

The project will promote durability and sustainability as well as the aesthetic, architectural and economic benefits for the Historic Wooden Towns in the Nordic Countries and NV-Russia.

## Means

The means of the project are collecting of knowledge, information and cultural experiences, coordination of common knowledge as well as common attitudes and principles, dissemination of knowledge through seminars, work-shops and expert meetings, sharing best practice raising awareness

Also to create a network of the interested groups of experts – associations, civil servants, private owners, researchers, universities teachers and students – to work out the relevant for their regions suggestions to preserve and to develop further wooden architecture and sustainable design.

## Background

The project goes in many ways back to the 1970'ies where about 160 registrated Nordic Historic Wooden Towns were under severe pressure by the 'modern development' – wider roads, more parking lots, more modern living houses, office space etc. Several impotrant historic areas were demolished or started to be demolished, but after a common Nordic Project in 1968 – 74, it succeeded to stop the demolitions in most places.

To day these surviving wooden towns has turned to be very attractive and popular living places, but that entails new threads for the wooden towns and buildings, sometimes as severe as in 1970'ies: Need for extension of the living space, need for further insolation, need for conservation, repair and restoration with special, often rare, materials and crafts techniques – but also a need for planning and management of the whole town area.

We have identified 5 areas of to days threats for the historic wooden towns:

1. Building materials, production, properties and use
2. Interdisciplinary collaboration on restoration, reuse and transformation
3. Economy and law, business and tourism
4. Tools for planning and management of the environment, public space and backyards.
5. Conservation work, exterior and interior decorations, wood protection etc.



In 1968-74 Denmark was not part of the Nordic Historic Wooden Town Project, but to day, as the app. 70.000 Danish historic timber frame buildings in their construction are thoroughbred wooden buildings. A weakness of the old project was also lack of conservation expertise for the exterior and interior decorations, and new ways to treat and protect the wood. It is therefore very fortunate for the project to be able to co-operate with Russian experts in this field. In the four Nordic countries we have worked together on these subjects for about 3-4 years, so it is very exciting to meet a new partner with nearly the same problems, but other expertise and views – as we experienced the Russian presence in our last seminar in Alingsås in Sweden in April and our return visit in St. Petersburg in October.

*The map from 1972 showing the around 160 historic Nordic Wooden Towns – now completed with about 15 Danish wooden towns with timber frame buildings. These towns are still the main stakeholders of the new wooden town project*

## Participants

The participants are organisations working with wooden architecture and wooden towns from 5 countries: Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark and NW-Russia.

WP-1-3	Participant	Svenska byggnadsvårdsföreningen (Björn Ohlén, Hans Sandström)	NGO	Sweden
WP-1-3	participant	Fortidsminneforeningen (Leif Jaeger, Ola Fjeldheim)	NGO	Norge
WP-1-3	Participant	Netværk for Bindingsværk (Søren Hossy, Per Godtfredsen)	NGO	Danmark
WP-1-3	Participant	Finlands Historiska Städer (March 2019) (Emilia Saatsi, Tuulikki Kilo)	NGO	Finland
WP-1-3	Participant	Sortavala, former City Duma Building /Maria Kronidovna Gogoleva. Kinerma 'Village of the year 2016' /Nadezhda V. Kalmykova KIZHI Museum/Margarita Kisternaya Karelian Research Center of Russian Academy of Sciences (KarRC RAS)/Pavel Petrov	NGO	NW-Russia

## Subjects

The project deals with 5 topics that are taking place in all 5 countries, but where one country is particularly responsible for one of these:

1. The wooden town: Economy and law, business and tourism, In co-operation with the municipality of Risør (N)
2. The wooden town: Building materials, production, properties and use. In co-operation with the Royal Academy in Copenhagen (DK)
3. The wooden town: Interdisciplinary collaboration on restoration, reuse and transformation. In co-operation with University of Gothenburg and Hantverkslaboratoriet (S)
4. The wooden town: Tools for planning and management of the environment, public space and backyards. In co-operation with Historic Towns of Finland (FIN)
5. The wooden town: Reuse and transformation. In co-operation with the minicipalety of Røros (Norway)
6. Conservation work, exterior and interior decorations, wood protection, timber selection for construction. The Russian Partners

## Aktivitets

All 6 topics are treated according to the same plan and procedure:

### WP-1

- a. Gathering of knowledge (state of the art), cooperation and exchange of experience and best practice - in collaboration with knowledge centers, Universities, municipalities and others
- b. Particular focus on climate and sustainability for the subjects (UN's 17 Sustainability Goals)
- c. Elaboration of principles and guidelines

The purpose is to promote the architectural whole of the buildings and the city, with a special focus on the 'spirit' of the wooden towns', that can promote a cultural identity of the residents, for example through identification and description of the intangible cultural heritage of the city or buildings.

### WP-2

- d. Dissemination, raising awareness, implementation and cooperation (National / local seminar, work-shops, practical projects, lectures, study visits, films, classical documentation etc.)

As the historic Wooden Towns are sustainable by their nature, the purpose is also to strengthen these properties – by raising awareness and changing attitudes at the owners and citizens.

### **WP-3**

- e. Organization of a transnational seminar or work shop in each country on the subjects of the country concerned, inviting professionals from other countries.

### **Schedule** (proposal)

Spring 2019	Risør, Norway	The wooden town and business.
Summer 2019	Karelia, Russia	Round-trip to the Russian partners
Autumn 2019	St. Petersburg	Seminar: Nordic Weeks.
Spring 2020	Helsingør, Denmark	Large Conference: Maintenance and energy improvements
Autumn 2020	Røros, Norway	Reuse of wooden buildings
Spring 2021	Borgå, Finland	Tematic Conference
Autumn 2021	Mariestad, Sweden	Protection of wooden towns and buildings

### **Deliverables**

#### **WP-1** : Date: Autumn 2019

Short report from the gathering of knowledge (state of the art), cooperation and exchange of experience and best practice. What have the countries learnt from each other.

Particular focus on climate and sustainability for the subjects (UN 17 Sustainability Goals)

Elaboration of principles and guidelines.

#### **WP-2** : Date: Autumn 2020

Short report after each event about the dissemination, raising awareness, implementation and cooperation (National / local seminar, work-shops, practical projects, lectures, study visits, films, classical documentation etc.). Results: Manual for maintenance of wooden buildings

#### **WP-3** : Date: Autumn 2021

Short report after each seminar. What have the countries learnt from each other during the organization of a transnational seminar or work shop in each country on the subjects of the country concerned, inviting professionals from other countries. Results: Manual for crafts techniques

### **Contact:**

Network for Historic Nordic Wooden Towns

<https://www.nordisktreby.org/>

### **Secretariat 2019-2021:**

Søren Vadstrup, E: [soren.vadstrup@kadk.dk](mailto:soren.vadstrup@kadk.dk) P:+45 29 45 40 96