

Public Administration in Denmark Use GI to Make Information Available to the Citizens

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ABSTRACT

The Danish County Councils use and produce many data related to topography in Denmark concerning environment, nature and roads. The purpose is public service, planning and enforcement of laws. Another big issue is environmental monitoring.

The citizens and politicians demand service, - fast and accurate. Effectiveness is a big issue. A way to do things more effective is networking, making common datamodels, methods and sometimes application development with all 14 county councils involved. The county councils also network with other levels in the public administration, and everything is made voluntarily based on an idea, that results get better in a network with many different points of view.

To convert knowledge into service, much money and time is spend to make internet-services with maps combined with information to enhance the dialogue with the customer. Another big issue is a demand of access to "Your own case" concerning health, property and other communication between citizen and public administration.

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1. DANISH COUNTIES

Denmark is a small country in the Northern Europe with 5 million inhabitants. Public administration in Denmark is divided into 3 levels: state, county, municipality. There are 14 counties. The main drafts in the technical department in the counties are building roads, doing environmental monitoring, taking care of nature, taking care of drinking water resources and managing development of urban areas by physical planning. The county councils are not "above" the municipalities, but the county councils take care of issues, which are relevant on a regional level, and when most of the municipalities are too small to take care of it. Related to planning the county councils enforce a large number of laws concerning these technical issues.

1.1 Use of Digital Maps in the Danish counties

The Danish counties use and produce many data related to topography in Denmark concerning environment, nature and roads. The purpose of the registration of data is making a registration of topics for example nature and drinking water resources in the field to make a background of physical planning, protection of nature and enforcement of laws to create and maintain a positive development in the region.

The Danish counties have been using topographic maps from the national mapping agency called KMS as a background of the registration for many years. Since 1997 the topographic map made by KMS has been digital. The map is called TOP10DK and is made from airborne photogrammetry every 5th year. Another very important map is cadastral map from KMS, this map has also become digital. It is possible to show topography and cadastra together. A third important map is digital orthophotos from Kampsax. This product is made every 3rd year. Orthophoto combined with the 2 other products gives a very good background for planning and enforcement of laws.

1.2 GI-Co-orporation of Danish Counties

When the counties got the first digital maps, it was a very few people who knew how to use this new instrument and also the process with choosing the right software and getting education has been an expensive matter – both money and time. The technical directors decided in the middle of the 1990'ies to establish a corporation, where everybody in the technical department can meet colleagues in workgroups concerning GI/GIS. The basic thought is that 14 people think better than 1. When a group of people work together this way, it is a fact, that many new ideas and points of view are coming up. Also the social aspect about knowing other persons with the same job is important. One person in one county is able to make a quick contact to a person in another county, who might have solved a similar

problem. Contacts are made by phone without involving directors or other persons in charge of the counties.

Every year in March a annual-meeting is arranged. Everybody in the technical department in the counties get an invitation. 80 people show up and spend 2 days here. Every year there are the same 3 headlines for the sessions:

- a. What have been done in the workgroups since last year.
- b. Speakers who talk about topics relevant/interesting for everybody.
- c. Workgroups for the coming year are established.

Some workgroups end their work after 1 year. Other workgroups have been working for several years. The existing workgroups are:

1. Coordination (internal coordination and contact to ministry workgroups concerning geographical data and GI).
2. Mapping (specification for datasets, which are bought from KMS and others).
3. Datacatalogue and metadata (standards for the datasets which are made in the counties).
4. Layout for data concerning planning. (purpose is to show data from all 14 counties in a similar way to make it easier to understand for citizens and others).
5. Education (workshops concerning technical methods related to GI/GIS).
6. 3D (methods to handle 3D-data for planning, f.x. windmills, pollution, drinking water resources).
7. Data concerning property. (methods and software to make GI on these datasets).
8. Internet. (methods and software to make internet-services easy to use for the "customer").
9. GI to other departments in the county councils than technical department. (f.x. hospitals, colleges).

Link: www.snaptungis.dk

The members of the workgroups meet 4 – 6 times a year, and the members of the workgroups make their own decisions for the work.

Besides these mentioned workgroups there are workgroups concerning MapInfo and ArcView/ArcInfo. Often the counties develop new software together, because the needs are very often the same.

2.1 Access to Data from the Environmental Monitoring in the Counties

The way of working in the GI-cooperation has been a model for other workgroups in the technical departments in the counties. Among others there are technical workgroups for people who use the same database software for data from f.x. streams, lakes, the sea.

Also for these people a workgroup is an opportunity to solve problems together with colleagues from other counties. Also development of software has been easier this way,

because the expences have been reduced, and the quality of the software has become better. The needs of software and methods are described more detailed, when a group of people can use their experience to do it, and the software get better in shorter time this way. The software concerning these technical issues is very specialized and not available in the ordinary software developing companies.

In 1997 the directors of the technical departments in the counties agreed on establishing a common datamodel for the environmental data. This has been going on since then. The purpose is to make a common database, which can contain all datatypes and types of attributes from the environmental monitoring. When the database starts up in 2002, all database systems in the counties are going to deliver data from their local database to the common database. The result is meant to be, that all data from Denmark can be looked up in 1 place. The users of the database are the technical departments themselves, ministries, municipalities and citizens. There will be free access from the w.w.w. and the "frontdoor" to the database will be digital maps and look-up via postal addresses.

A coming result of this common database is a possibility to solve environmental problems and projects across the limits between the counties. In the future years we will see, that ressources both money and man-power are shrinking. This will be a possibility to be more effective with less ressources.

2.2 Access to "Your Own Case"

In the counties and all the other public administrations in Denmark there is a huge interest in creating digital administration these years. Digital administration means that all letters and other parts of a case are put into databases and systems, so everybody inside the administration have digital access to everything. This also gives the opportunity to put case information to the internet, where citizens with a personal password can get access to their own case. Seen from a GI point of view it is relevant to get geographical information systems combined to these systems, because many cases are related to a geographical place.

The first step in this proces is getting everything inside the organisation digital, next step is making a possibility to collect information digital via the internet from the customers. Many possibilities are given technically, but these things also demand development of the organisation. The organisations must be ready for a much closer dialogue with the customer than before.

3. CONCLUSION

Many very exiting things concerning public administration are happening these years. GI/GIS is used for more tasks than before and also in other parts of the administration than technical department. I think, that the use of GI will give a higher quality in the decisions, which are made in the public administration, and new possibilities will show up. But there is a lot of hard work to due, and I think that the best way through the work is dialogue and cooperation.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Anne Kjølhede

My background for describing this issue is not based on theoretical research but a knowledge of the tasks seen from a practical point of view.

I graduated as a surveyor from Aalborg University in 1992.

1993 - 1995 I had a job in Funen County Council in the technical department. Here I started to work with digital maps and GIS related to streams.

1995 - 2000 I made GI-concepts, GI-data and software in a private company. The customers were municipalities and cable companies in Denmark.

Since 2000 I'm a GI-coordinator in Vejle County in the technical department. Besides I'm a coordinator in the GI-cooperation of Danish counties.