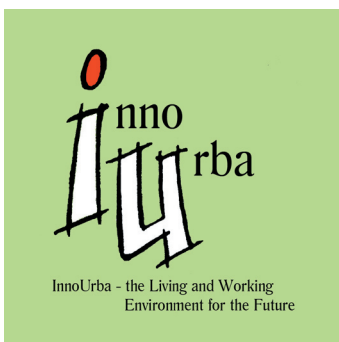




Helka-Liisa Hentilä and Leena Soudunsaari

## Land Use Planning Systems and Practices Oulu–Skanderborg–Umeå





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**Land Use Planning Systems and Practices  
Oulu–Skanderborg–Umeå**

InnoUrba project

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# Introduction

The CompOSU research project is a part of the *InnoUrba – the Living and Working Environment for the Future* project. The aim of the CompOSU research project is to analyse and compare land use planning processes and methods in the cities of Oulu, Skanderborg and Umeå, and to point out good practices especially related to interactive planning.

The research work is divided into three phases. The first two phases, during 16.4.–31.5.2008 and 1.6.–15.7.2008, concentrates on the description of the land use planning systems and practices on the national and local level. This report in hand is a summing-up of the first two research phases. In the third phase, starting at the beginning of 2009, the analysis and comparison of the planning processes will be carried out with the help of case studies.

The planning practices and methods of the participating cities have been approached through the use of a survey. The survey investigated the current land use planning systems of Denmark, Finland and Sweden, and particularly, the local ways of action in the different planning situations on the municipal level. The survey was sent to the InnoUrba Steering Group and Project Group at the end of April 2008. The total number of answers received was five: three from Finland, one from Denmark and one from Sweden. The respondents represented a small professional sample of planners with different positions, experiences and backgrounds.

The preliminary results of the survey were presented in the Skanderborg workshop on 21 May 2008. The findings were discussed and there was a possibility to complete the answers. The deeper analysis of the completed answers and additional material was carried out during the second research phase.

In this study report, the land use planning systems of the three countries are described and compared, and the results of the survey are presented and discussed in order to illuminate the local good planning practices.

The concept *land use planning system* covers the (hierarchical) planning levels and legal procedures constituted in the national Land Use and Building Acts and laws. *Planning practices* means the local workings of the planning authorities.

# I Land use planning systems

In order to understand the conditions for planning in each country, the planning systems of each country are presented below.

In ordered societies, planning is based on the legislation and regulations that define the planning system. These legal codes can vary from country to country and therefore generate different approaches to planning. (Newman & Thornley, 1996, p.27)

Newman and Thornley (1996) have classified the European planning systems in five categories: British, Napoleonic, Germanic, Scandinavian and East European. The grouping of the planning systems is based on *legal families*, and on *administrative families*, in which the limitations of the liability between the national, regional and local level are examined. The categories are summarised in Table 1.

Administrative levels	FRANCE	THE NETHERLANDS	GERMANY	FINLAND	SWEDEN	DENMARK	ENGLAND
<b>NATIONAL LEVEL</b>	Legislation Nationally important projects Direction of local planning	Legislation National programmes	Legislation	Legislation	Legislation	Legislation	Legislation Nationally important projects Direction of local planning
<b>REGIONAL LEVEL</b>	(Regional planning)	Regional legislation Regional planning	Regional legislation Regional planning	Regional planning	(Regional planning)	(Regional planning)	Area development strategy
<b>LOCAL LEVEL</b>	Master plan Development plan Detailed plan	Master plan Detailed plan	Master plan Detailed plan	Master plan Detailed plan	Master plan Detailed plan	Master plan Detailed plan	Master plan Detailed plan
European juridical families	<b>NAPOLEONIC FAMILY</b> also Belgium, Spain, Italy		<b>GERMANIC FAMILY</b> also Switzerland, Austria and others		<b>SCANDINAVIAN FAMILY</b> also Norway		<b>BRITISH FAMILY</b> also Ireland, Wales and others

■ Focus of the planning

Table 1. The planning 'families' of Europe. Original source: Newman & Thornley, 1996, p.29, adapted from Närhi & Pakarinen, 2007, p.97.

It appears that Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden are classified in the same category. The planning systems are relatively similar because of the tripartition into national, regional and local levels. Thus, the actors of the planning processes are similar. There are differences, for example, in the focus and emphasis of planning. In Finland, the planning system is regarded as a hierarchical system but in Denmark and Sweden the hierarchy is not stressed. Local self-government is seen as one of the cornerstones of the Scandinavian constitution (Newman & Thornley, 1996, p.34-35). In all of the countries, the role of the local land use planning level is the most influential.

Next, the planning systems are described on country level.

## **1.1 Denmark**

Until 2007, the Danish land use planning system was organized as a hierarchical system divided into three administrative levels. Planning on the national level was carried out by the Ministry of the Environment. Regional planning was realized by the counties. The master plan and the local detailed plan were implemented by the municipalities.

A local government reform came into effect on 1 January 2007. The reform replaced the thirteen counties and created five regional councils: Nordjylland, Midtjylland, Syddanmark, Sjælland and Hovedstaden. Municipalities were merged into larger units and the number of municipalities was reduced from 271 to 98. (Danish Ministry of the Environment, 2007, p.4)

The reform changed also the Danish planning system. The new system sets the scene for dialogue based planning. Municipalities are now responsible for planning of town and country areas. The role of the municipal plans is more strategic and development based. Planning on the national level has been strengthened. The state is now responsible for ensuring the national planning interests, particularly in the matters concerning the environment, nature and spatial planning. The regional councils prepare a new type of plan, a regional spatial development plan. There are seven decentralized new Environment Centres monitoring how the legislation functions in practice in the local areas. (Danish Ministry of the Environment, 2007, p.4-5)

The Danish planning institutions and instruments are presented in Table 2.



## THE DANISH PLANNING SYSTEM

	POLICY INSTITUTION	POLICY INSTRUMENTS	
	Planning authority	Type of plans	Legal effect
<b>NATIONAL LEVEL</b>	Ministry of the Environment	<i>Landsplanredegørelse</i> (National planning reports)	Advisory guidelines
		<i>Landsplandirektiver</i> (National planning directives)	Advisory guidelines
<b>REGIONAL LEVEL</b>	County councils	<i>Regionale udviklingsplan</i> (Regional spatial development plan)	Strategic vision
<b>LOCAL LEVEL</b>	Municipal councils	<i>Kommuneplan</i> (Municipal plan)	Structure and framework for the local plan
		<i>Lokalplan</i> (Local detailed plan)	Binding

Table 2. The planning institutions and instruments in Denmark.

### 1.1.1 Policy instruments

The Planning Act ensures that planning synthesizes the interests of society with respect to land use and contributes to protecting the nature and environment of the country. The Act involves the public in the planning processes at the municipal, regional and national levels. Planning authorities decide how the public participation is arranged, for example, through meetings, discussions and working groups or through electronic participation. Public participation with nongovernmental organizations and other stakeholders is activated before the formal planning procedure begins. All the plans prepared in Denmark are saved into the Danish National Portal on the Environment ([www.PlansystemDK.dk](http://www.PlansystemDK.dk)) where anyone can visit and investigate the planned areas. (Danish Ministry of the Environment, 2007, p.6-7)

The planning system in Denmark has a strongly decentralized division of tasks. On the national level, the Ministry of the Environment ensures the national interests through national planning. Every four years, the Ministry submits a national planning report (*Landsplanredegørelse*) concerning the regional development and municipal planning. For example, the report from 2006 introduced a concept of urban corridor in the area of Eastern Jylland. The focus of planning is to ensure the coordination of land use and economical development possibilities in an appropriate way that the open, coherent landscapes between the towns are maintained. In addition, an overview of the national interests concerning the municipal planning is published every four years. The national planning directives (*Landsplandirektiver*) may be used to guide a specific planning

activity, e.g. a placement of a gas pipeline. The planning of Greater Copenhagen is also guided by a national planning directive (the Finger Plan 2007). Furthermore, the Ministry of the Environment publishes guidelines e.g. on municipal planning, rural zone administration, local planning and environmental impact assessments. (Danish Ministry of the Environment, 2007, p.8-11; European Union, 1999, p.29)

On the regional level, the new regional councils prepare regional spatial development plans (*regionale udviklingsplan*) which present the strategic visions of the development of each region. The plans are collaborative projects between the municipal and regional councils, business and other stakeholders. The basis for the regional spatial development plans is comprised of a regional business development strategy prepared by the regional economic growth forums. Municipal plans must be in accordance with the regional spatial development plan. The preparation of the development plan is linked with making the decisions on the municipal planning strategies. The two processes should be in a close dialogue. (Danish Ministry of the Environment, 2007, p.16-17)

After the reform of the local government structure, the municipal plan (*kommuneplan*) has become the most important type of plan on the municipal level. A municipal plan provides a comprehensive overview of the development of a municipality with e.g. the plans for housing, workplaces, transport, nature and environmental protection, which were previously parts of the regional plan. The municipal plan includes a general structure (linked with the municipal political strategy for development and land use), guidelines for land use (e.g. designation of the protected areas) and a framework for the content of the local plans for the specific areas of the municipality (e.g. transfer of the rural zones to urban areas). Municipalities may agree on a joint municipal plan (concerning the general structure). (Danish Ministry of the Environment, 2007, p.18-23)

Local plans (*lokalplaner*) concretize the political strategy and objectives of a municipal plan on a detailed level. The local plans are legally binding for landowners. The local plans have numerous uses, and the content and extent of the plans may vary widely. The general use of local planning is to provide detailed planning regulations for a small area in order to implement a specific development project, e.g. a new residential district, hotel resort, buildings for public purposes or business construction. (Danish Ministry of the Environment, 2007, p.23-25; European Union, 1999, p.43)

## I.2 Sweden

The planning system in Sweden is not hierarchical but it is based on a decentralized dialogue between the national, regional and local levels. The role of the national land use planning is fairly weak. The most important ministry in the field of land use planning is the Ministry of the Environment, supported especially by the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning (*Boverket*). *Boverket* supervises issues related to sustainable development and spatial planning from legislative and procedural perspectives focusing on regional sustainable urban development. (European Union, 2000, p.15-17, 33; *Boverket*)

On the regional level, the County Administrative Boards (*Länsstyrelse*) are responsible for supervising local planning. They cooperate with the municipalities and provide advice and comments on different types of plans. The main planning responsibility is put on the municipal level. (European Union, 2000, p.16)

The main planning laws in Sweden are the Planning and Building Act (*Plan och Bygglag*) and the Environmental Code (*Miljöbalken*). One of the main objectives of the two laws is to secure good living conditions for people today and in the future (a long term good management in ecological, social, cultural and economic terms). (The Swedish Planning and Building Act)

The Swedish planning institutions and instruments are presented in Table 3.

### THE SWEDISH PLANNING SYSTEM

	POLICY INSTITUTION	POLICY INSTRUMENTS	
	Planning authority	Type of plans	Legal effect
<b>NATIONAL LEVEL</b>	Parliament, Government, Ministry of the Environment	<i>Rikspan</i> (National planning guidelines)	Advisory guidelines
<b>REGIONAL LEVEL</b>	Regional planning body	<i>Regionplan</i> (Regional plan)	Not binding
<b>LOCAL LEVEL</b>	Municipal councils	<i>Översiktsplan</i> (Master plan)	Not binding
		<i>Detaljplan</i> (Detailed plan)	Binding
		<i>Områdesbestämmelser</i> (Area regulations)	Binding

Table 3. The planning institutions and instruments in Sweden.

## 1.2.1 Policy instruments

Planning on the national, county and regional level does not result in any legally binding regulations, with the exception of the preservation of certain specified areas. The plans are aimed at giving guidelines and improve the cooperation and discussion between the different sectors. Public participation with citizens and the bodies who may have a considerable interest in the planning proposals is organized in the planning processes of the different kinds of plans. For example on the national level, the cross-border and inter-regional issues are also taken into account: e.g. there has been Swedish-Finnish cooperation across the border with Tornedalen and Swedish-Danish cooperation concerning the Copenhagen-Malmö region. (European Union, 2000, p.20, 23, 26, 72)

There is no formal planning institute on the national level. On regional level, the County Administrative Board ensures the implementation of the national objectives and promotes the long-time regional development through different programmes and guidelines. A regional plan (*regionplan*) may be worked out and adopted if matters concerning the use of land and water areas in several municipalities require joint studies or, for example, if work on master plans needs coordination. Planning is done by a specified regional planning body (*regionplanenämnd*) appointed by the government (*Regering*). In addition, the county council (*Landsting*) may also be responsible for regional transport planning, spatial planning systems and regional economic development in general. (European Union, 2000, p.16-17, 27, 30, 34)

On the local level, every municipality must prepare a master plan (*översiktsplan*) which covers the whole area of the municipality. The master plan gives guidelines and a land-use overview of development. In addition, the national interest must be taken into consideration in accordance with the Environmental Code. The master plan is not legally binding but it is a general instrument for the planning policy of the municipality. (European Union, 2000, p.16, 37)

In the Swedish planning system, the detailed plan (*detaljplan*) is the most important and commonly used. It is adopted for a limited part of a municipality, where a continuous development process or other reason to make a detailed plan is necessary. The plan is legally binding. The detailed plan must be well prepared in consultation with the residents and bodies concerned. For defined areas not covered by a detailed plan, legally binding area regulations (*områdesbestämmelser*) can be adopted. In addition, a property regulation plan (*fastighetsplan*) may be adopted in order to facilitate the division of land into plots within a detailed plan. (European Union, 2000, p.17, 40-41)

### I.3 Finland

The Finnish land use planning system is organized as a hierarchical system divided into three administrative levels. The plans on the higher level steer the lower plans. On the national level, the Ministry of the Environment and the Finland's National Land Use Guidelines outline the land use development into the future. On the regional level, the Regional Environment Centres (*alueellinen ympäristökeskus*) guide and advise municipal planning. On the local level, the municipality is responsible for master and detailed planning. (Ympäristöministeriö)

The most important legislation controlling land use, spatial planning and construction in Finland is the Land Use and Building Act. The Act aims at, among others, creating the basis for high quality living environment and promote ecologically, economically, socially and culturally sustainable development. (Maankäyttö- ja rakennuslaki)

The Land Use and Building Act was reformed in 2000. With the reform, the role of the municipality as a decision-maker of the land use planning was strengthened. The detail and master plans are now approved and ratified by the municipal government. Also by the reform, the citizen participation strengthened. The residents and other bodies whom the planning concerns have better possibilities to participate in planning. (Ekroos and Majamaa, 2000) The Finnish planning institutions and instruments are presented in Table 4.

#### THE FINNISH PLANNING SYSTEM

	POLICY INSTITUTION	POLICY INSTRUMENTS	
	Planning authority	Type of plans	Legal effect
<b>NATIONAL LEVEL</b>	Council of State	<i>Alueidenkäyttötavoitteet</i> (National Land Use Guidelines)	Advisory guidelines
<b>REGIONAL LEVEL</b>	Regional councils	<i>Maakuntakaava</i> (Regional plan)	Binding
<b>LOCAL LEVEL</b>	Municipal councils	<i>Yhteinen yleiskaava</i> (Joint master plan)	Optional
		<i>Yleiskaava</i> (Master plan)	Binding
		<i>Asemakaava</i> (Detailed plan)	Binding

Table 4. The planning institutions and instruments in Finland.

### **1.3.1 Policy instruments**

The interactive approach to planning is emphasized; the regional and local plans are drawn up through participatory planning procedures. The planning authority must publicize planning information so that the interested parties are able to follow and influence the planning process. (Maankäyttö- ja rakennuslaki) For example, in the starting phase of a planning process, the Participation and Assessment Scheme (*osallistumis- ja arviointisuunnitelma*) is presented. Interaction is built into each phase of the planning process – start, preparation, proposal and approval.

There is no national plan in Finland. The Council of State formulates the National Land Use Guidelines (*valtakunnalliset alueidenkäyttötavoitteet*) which are implemented mainly through regional plans. The guidelines are informative. The guidelines concern the living environment, cultural and natural heritage, recreation uses and natural resources, well-functioning regional structure and community structure and objectives of services, traffic and economic life. (Ympäristöministeriö)

On the regional level, the Regional Environment Centres guide and advise municipal planning. The Regional Councils draw up and approve the regional plans (*maakuntakaava*), which are statutory. The regional plans must be taken into account when planning, preparing or amending local plans. On the local level, the municipalities produce local master plans (*yleiskaava*) and local detailed plans (*asemakaava*) which both are statutory. A master plan may be drawn up to cover all or a part of a municipality, or several municipalities jointly. An optional joint master plan (*yhteinen yleiskaava*) must be approved by the joint organization of the municipalities and the Ministry of the Environment. (Ympäristöministeriö)

### **1.4 The land use planning systems in the light of the survey answers**

According to the classification of planning systems in Europe, it appears that Denmark, Finland and Sweden are located in the same category: the Scandinavian family. The role of the local land use planning level is emphasized in all of the countries. There are also differences in the planning systems. Especially in Finland the system is more hierarchical in comparison with Denmark and Sweden.

The main principles of the plans used on the different planning levels in the three countries are similar. In Denmark and Sweden, planning is more advisory than in Finland where planning is in most cases legally binding. The national planning guidelines are regarded as advisory guidelines in all of the countries.

The national interest must be taken into consideration in accordance with the different plans.

The survey results indicate that despite of the tripartition of the policy institutions and policy instruments into national, regional and local levels, the progress of the commonly set goals is challenging. For example, how are the long-term regional development issues linked with the local issues? Are the long-term issues endangered when local decision-makers have more power? Is there enough know-how and professional skill at the local level, for instance, to see the general view of planning?

On the other hand, the tripartition and hierarchical system is seen as logical, systematic and enabling – one can concentrate on creative work. Particularly in Finland, the support of higher level plans (regional plan) can prevent sudden changes that might otherwise be harmful.

It was pointed out especially in the Danish answers, that the possibility to plan in a close dialogue with the local interests has been made easier through the reform of the planning system. According to the answers, in each country the public participation is working quite well. It appears though that there are difficulties to create public interest particularly in the master planning phase. Is it a question of methods? How to make the master planning phase more inviting and relevant for the local people?

The Finnish respondents observed that there should be more emphasis on sustainability issues on the regional and national levels, for example, to prevent urban sprawl which is difficult to deal with at the municipal level. The Swedish respondents pointed out that the correspondence between the Planning and Building Act (political process) and the Environmental Code (juridical process) could be better.

## 2 Findings concerning planning practices

The survey material has been analysed to point out good practices especially relating to different phases of a planning process: Starting the project, organizing the project, using consultants, collecting information, organizing the participation and quality. Next, the answers of the survey questions are discussed.

### 2.1 Starting the project

In Denmark, Sweden and Finland, the initiative of a planning project can come from a municipality or private sector. The new development areas are, however, mostly initiated by municipalities.

In all the countries, the objectives of planning are formulated quite similarly: through negotiations, discussions with the relevant organizations and divisions. Also the so-called unofficial meetings are used (short starting meetings with the private sector). It was pointed out that the objectives may change during the planning process – according to the new information etc. Thus, planning is also a learning process.

The connection between the planning and other administrative policies and practices, for example the budget, is necessary. How do the cities in question deal with these requirements? In Skanderborg a special checklist (under development) is used to ensure the coherence between the different policies and strategies. In Oulu, a special land use implementation programme (MATO) and a housing programme/settlements strategy (included in the MATO) are used. The use of these special programmes is quite progressive in comparison to the ‘normal Finnish practice’.

### 2.2 Organizing the project

In Oulu and Skanderborg, the planning group consists of persons from different divisions and, depending on the scale of the project, of other organizations (e.g. representatives of regional museums, environment centres etc.). In Oulu, a steering group is organized for the most important projects. The project manager leads the project. Project work is a typical working method in Oulu. In Umeå, the planning architect acts as a hub and contacts the persons and organizations needed in the process. In all the cities, the organization varies according to the size and importance of the project.



According to the answers, it seems that in Skanderborg and Oulu planning is in 'project format' – planning has a start, timetable and an end. The working method is based on project work between the Project Group and Steering Group depending on the issues of the project. The Project and Steering Groups are usually meant for the 'professionals', but the private landowners and stakeholders could be involved if needed. In Umeå, mostly professionals are involved in the planning process.

In the Skanderborg workshop, the challenge of noticing the public opinion was discussed. In all of the countries, plans must be drawn up through participatory planning procedures, which give e.g. the local residents and other interest groups the chance to get involved in the planning processes that affect them. In Skanderborg, participatory planning procedures especially with the neighbouring municipalities are used to gather, for example, ideas on how to develop the municipality in the future. It was pointed out that particularly in Finland the volume of public participation is very low.

### **2.3 Using consultants**

In all three countries, consultants are used for composing the analyses, surveys and studies needed. According to the answers, the selection of the consultants is based on both the quality and price. There may come up problems if the selection is based only on the cheapest price. Usually, the invitation to submit tenders is sent to consultants known before.

Umeå has created a guideline for consultants working with land use plans. In Skanderborg, consultants are also used in the process of involving the public, taking care of the interaction. In addition, the public opinion is gathered through the Internet pages. The discussion with the locals must start in an early stage of the process. It is important that a sender can have a response from the planner to his/her idea. The locals must feel that their ideas are taken seriously. The best of the sent ideas are used as a starting point for the planning. The objectives of planning are defined and worked further in several workshops with the interested residents.

It seems that in Oulu, architectural competitions are more frequently used than in the other cities. The competitions are recognized to be good instruments to obtain useful and good quality ideas about a defined planning problem. In Umeå and Skanderborg, there is a lack of tradition on using architectural competitions. Especially in Sweden, there is a lack of confidence between politicians and architects – the politicians do not trust that an architectural competition could provide material that is desired among the market forces. In addition, consultants could be used to produce ideas without an organized competition.



Photos 1-3. The first InnoUrba workshop in Skanderborg 21.-22.5.2008. (Inger Espersen).



## **2.4 Collecting information**

The planning decisions are based on similar material and data in all of the countries. The analyses and research work are experienced worthwhile. Especially in Finland, where planning is, according to the renewed Land Use and Building Act, supposed to be based on analysis and research. In Skanderborg there is an idea to include the health and sustainability issues in the analysis as well (under development).

Usually the municipality staff or consultants draft the research and analysis reports in all of the cities. There must be a multidisciplinary approach. The drafts are usually made by the consultants under supervision of the municipality. In Oulu, the procedure enables the use of university cooperation.

In addition, alternative plans are usually created in the planning process to test and to reach the best solution. There is never only one right solution.

In Finland, a wide scale of impact assessments is done partly due to the Land Use and Building Act. For example, the impacts on environment (YVA) and social issues (IVA) are studied. Also in Sweden and Denmark the impact assessments cover the environmental issues etc. In Oulu, the assessments are made by the planning organization (or consultants, university) and they are presented and discussed with the regional Environmental Centre. For larger planning areas or processes there may be special seminars discussing the YVA and IVA issues.

## **2.5 Organizing the participation**

In all the countries, the organization of the participation is based on the legal framework (public hearings etc.). There are some additional methods used especially in Skanderborg, where the participation of the local people takes place in a very early stage of the planning process (Internet based hearing and a dialogue tool). In Finland, the participation and assessment scheme (OAS) is published at the beginning of a project. In Umeå, meetings and discussions are used. A guideline is created and used as a basis for planning.

Particularly in Skanderborg, consultants are used in the process of involving the residents. The planning methods consist e.g. of workshops and participatory planning games. In addition, it was pointed out that the role of the local media is quite crucial in supporting or resisting the plans.

The planning participation consists also of public-private-partnerships (PPP) and/or public-private-cooperation. In Skanderborg, Kildebjerg-Ry has been

organized as a PPP. In Umeå, there are PPP projects in the main street area in the city centre. In Oulu, the public-private-cooperation is quite extensive, especially in the central areas. A cooperation agreement is done covering the planning phase. The land use contracts are used as development tools – setting the implementation phase. The contract includes e.g. goals, principles, surveys, services, maintenance, parking and costs.

## **2.6 Organizing the quality**

In Oulu, intensive cooperation with different divisions is a part of the project work, especially between the city planning and building permit departments. The city planner is able to give guidelines and comment on the preliminary building plans. A steering group for the construction phase (for development areas) can be named to ensure the guidance also from city planning. In the most important PPP cases, a quality agreement can be made. As the answers indicate, the question is about workings of the organization. The city of Umeå is preparing for an ISO 9001 standard in a couple of years.

It seems that most of the policies and strategies deal with the schedules, quantity and contents of the plans rather than with the planning methods or practices. It is assumed that the normal, legal planning system and its procedures are followed.

In the Skanderborg workshop, the importance of the internal development of the practices was discussed. It is related also to the question of life-long learning, as well as personal policies.

Lastly, the respondents were asked about the planning practices they are satisfied with. In Oulu, the work practices of the organization are seen well-functioning with clear goals. The results of the architectural competitions have been good and benchmarking with other cities in Finland and abroad is regarded important. In Skanderborg, the participation with the citizens has brought good results. In Umeå, the use of a steering document concerning the quality issues has worked well.

The respondents noted also the practices they would like to develop. It was discussed in the Skanderborg workshop, that the master plan level should involve more participation – as Anebjerg area is to be planned in close dialogue with the local interests. The master plan could be more like a land use vision or policy document integrating the interests. Then the physical planning would be more on the detailed plan level. Also cooperation with different sectors of planning could be strengthened further.

## 3 Guidance for good practices

In order to develop the planning practices in the cities in question, it must be seen that the studied processes and practices are bounded by the national and local contexts. Thus, the practices are not directly transferable into different planning systems. In addition, it should be noted that the sample size was quite small. This has an influence on the generalization of the results.

In conclusion, the good practices of the cities have been gathered to give tips for the development of the local procedures.

### Starting the project

- Jointly made decisions and guiding planning strategies (e.g. implementation programme and a settlements strategy) make the planning actions easier. It is important that the political decision-making is in line with the land use planning strategies. Hence, the development of the land use planning is foreseeable and controllable.
- It should be recognized that planning is a learning process. There should be enough time for the possible changes in the process.

### Organizing the project

- Planning based on project work enables interaction and flow of information between the different departments and organizations. The various interests may be recognized at an early stage of a project.
- Project work and jointly set objectives may quicken the proceeding of a project. The project has a start and an end, according to the time scale of the project.
- Communication between other interest groups, such as neighbouring municipalities, private partners and residents, should be initiated at the earliest possible stage of a project.

### **Using consultants**

- Guidelines for consultants working with land use ensure the quality of planning. Selection of the consultants should be based also on quality, not just on price.
- Consultants could be used also in the realization of the public participation. However, the municipal planner must not become invisible. The response to the public participation should be quick and justified.
- The use of architectural competitions has had good results. To reach the best solution, the planning problem should be clearly defined. Production of several alternative ideas is possible through a competition.

### **Collecting information**

- In addition to the legal procedures, the use of alternative plans enriches the study of the planning task. The result could be a synthesis of the best ideas among the alternatives. There should be enough time for discussion.

### **Organizing the participation**

- In addition to the legal procedures, additional methods could be used. Participation through Internet has been a success. The participation and information flow should be initiated in an early stage of a project – otherwise the information comes too late.
- Larger public-private-cooperation projects require different type of approach, for example, a cooperation agreement or even a development company.

### **Organizing the quality**

- The linkage of planning and building supervision has made the construction of a good quality living environment possible. The quality of the implementation phase should also be regarded, for example, by guiding plans and guidelines for construction.
- Quality consists also of well-being of the planners. There should be a possibility to develop professional skills, as well as, the operation of the organization.

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# Appendix

## SURVEY OF THE LAND USE PLANNING SYSTEMS AND PLANNING PRACTICES

### Background information on the interviewee

- Name of the interviewee:
- Name of the organization:
- Status in organization:
- Emphases of the current work duties in relation to land use planning:
- Years worked in current position:

### The land use planning system

*With the land use planning system we mean the (hierarchical) planning levels and legal procedures constituted in the national Land Use and Building Acts and laws. For example, the current Finnish system has three levels of land use plans with a clear division of labour between them: the regional land use plan, the local master plan and the local detailed plan. The land use planning system is hierarchical; the plans on the higher level steer the lower plans. The regional and local plans are drawn up through participatory planning procedures which enables the local residents to get involved in the planning process that affect them.*

According to your personal opinion, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the land use planning system in your country?

- The weaknesses are:
- The strengths are:
- What would you like to change in your national planning system /legal planning procedures?

### The planning practices

*With the planning practices we mean the local ways of action in the different municipal level planning situations, such as, the organization of a planning project team or the ways of stakeholder interaction.*

#### Starting the project

- Who initiates the planning project? Are there differences according to the type of a planning project (e.g. a housing area project or a city centre development project)?
- Who formulates the objectives of a plan? How is it done – are there, for example, moments of organized stakeholder interaction in the very early stages of the project?
- What is the connection between planning and other administrative policies or practices, for example, the budget of the municipality, the settlements strategy and the building program, the strategy of healthy and sustainable living, the strategy of integration etc.?

### **Organizing the project**

- How is the planning project organized?
- Who are involved in the project group /steering group?
- Does the organization vary according to the type of a planning project? If yes, how?

### **Using consultants**

- In what kind of planning tasks do you usually contract consultants?
- How the selection of consultants is made and on what basis (“price or quality”)?
- Are the architectural competitions used as a tool in the selection of consultants and in the production of ideas?

### **Collecting information**

- On what kind of material, data and plans are the planning decisions usually based on?
- How regular is the production of alternative planning solutions – does it take place almost always, sometimes or rarely?
- On what subjects are the specific research /analysis reports usually done?
- Who drafts these research /analysis reports?
- What impact assessments (“konsekvensanalys”) are usually executed during the planning process?
- Who does the impact assessments? What methods are used? Who evaluates the impacts?

### **Organizing the participation**

- How is the participation of the citizens /other interest groups organized?
- What kind of participatory planning methods are used? For instance, give an example of your own experience.
- How is the PPP (public-private-partnership) /participation with private interests organized? Give an example of your own experience.

### **Organizing the quality**

- From a plan on a paper to a good quality built environment – what kind of quality tools are used in steering and /or guiding the realization process?
- Do the land-use planning policy documents /strategies in your town include strategies, recommendations or tools related to planning practices or methods? If yes, what kind of practices are promoted?
- How is the development of planning practices /methods /tools organized in you town? For example, do you organize internal workshops, use consultants or participate to post-graduate professional education?
- On what planning practice/-s in your town are you especially satisfied?
- What practices would you like to develop and how?



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