

LILLA CHEFSMÖTET, 2020

Skype-meeting, organised by Sweden, March 24, 2020

Participants:

Susanne Ås Sivborg, Sweden (Chair)
Anne-Cathrine Frøstrup, Norway
Johnny Welle, Norway
Sigurð í Jákupsstovu, Faroe Island
Eydís Líndal Finnbogadóttir, Iceland
Margrét Hauksdóttir, Iceland
Pia Dahl Højgaard, Denmark
Kristian Møller, Denmark
Thomas Gaarde Madsen, Greenland
Petri Korpinen, Finland
Mikael Lilje, Sweden, (NIC and secretary)

Acceptance of agenda

Susanne welcomed all participants to the meeting. A special welcome to Sigurð í Jákupsstovu, who is the new DG on Faroe Island, and Johnny Welle, the new DG in Norway. Anne-Cathrine is ending her term as DG at Kartverket next week. Apology from Arvo Kokkonen who was replaced by Petri Korpinen at this meeting.

The proposed agenda was adopted. To the “Any other business” we added an item on the proposed Arctic SDI Steering Committee meeting in June.

Update and discussion on the effects of the Corona pandemic in our respective countries and how it affects us and our organisations.

The different organisations were invited to discuss the current situation in respective country and organisation regarding the situation with the Coronavirus COVID-19. The following three questions was discussed from each organisation;

- How are we maintaining “business as usual”?
- What can we learn from each other?
- How is our data used during this “crises”?

Lantmäteriet Sweden: The situation with political restrictions in Sweden is probably not as harsh as in other countries. We have not shut down as much as in other countries. We are still welcome to work in our offices in most parts of the country. The only major exception is Stockholm where people are asked to work from home. Elder people (>70 years) are asked to stay at home and avoid social contacts. Domestic travelling should be limited to only necessary travelling and international travelling is not allowed. There is currently one detected case of Coronavirus among the staff meaning that the whole Customer Service is currently working from home.

Lantmäteriet has installed a crises management team that meets at 8 am every day. Messages to the employees are published on our internal website, also every day. Staff is asked to stay at home as soon as they feel the least ill.

Lantmäteriet has not noticed any specific use of data, not any increase nor any decrease. Very much business as usual. Lantmäteriet do believe that the productivity will decrease and is following this closely. The organisation has noticed that things tend to be slower and take more time. Staff is not that used to work from home meaning that they need to find new and efficient way of meeting and working.

SDFE, Denmark. Kristian reported that Denmark has been shut down for almost 2 weeks. People are working from home. This situation is expected to last at least over the Eastern holiday. People are also asked to use their vacation and flex time preferable now than later. SDFE noticed a decrease of the use of data when the situation started but have noticed that the use is more or less back to normal. As expected, there are challenges to maintain productivity but at the same time staff is incredible to find new ways of doing the work and being as efficient as possible.

Geodatastyrelsen, Denmark.

Pia added to Kristian's description that there has been observed a slight decrease in number of errands to Geodatastyrelsen and if this continues, it will affect the financing to the authority. How much is though too early to say.

Registers Iceland: Margrét mentioned that the society is shut down. Compulsory Emergency plans have been done by each State Agency and priority tasks identified. There are also restrictions on the number of people that can meet at the same time and the number is set to 20 people. The staff is still welcome to work at the office, but employees have been divided into three groups that is not supposed to work together and not even physically meet. One third of the staff is working from home. The staff is worried about the situation and from a management perspective, Margrét sends message on Workplace to all staff members every day. The management of the organisation has short online meeting every day and also the crisis management team. The employees of Register Iceland are also asked to take holiday or use their flex time.

Landmælingar Íslands: Eydís added to Margréts reflections by saying that all staff members may work from home and over half of the do so. The work is OK despite the new situation. It is a challenge to use technical tools to meet and work, but staff is dealing with the situation in a very good way. The organisation has offered assistance to the "front line institutes" in using spatial information for analyses but have not seen a big difference in the use of it.

Kartverket, Norway: Kartverket through Anne-Cathrine presented a similar situation in Norway as in the other countries. Health is a priority before economy. There are strong regulations for restaurants, bar, schools etc. and it has been so for some time now. It is believed that it will continue at least over the Eastern holiday. The staff is asked not to work at the office and very few staff members are at the offices every day. Only those who must. For Kartverket, they have identified the critical tasks that needs to be running and that is e.g. mapping services, positioning services, land registration and general service desk. Anne-Cathrine reports that production is OK

and that the staff has adopted in a very good way with working from home. She sends messages to the staff every day.

Ministry of Finance, Greenland: Four cases of Covid-19 has been detected in Nuuk meaning that the city has been shut down. There is a fear that they reacted too late and is worried that it has spread already to remote villages. There is no possibility to test for the virus on Greenland meaning that any test results take two days minimum since they need to send it to mainland Denmark. Everyone is working from home. The good thing in all this is that they have been testing and using digital tools, much more than previous.

Umhvørvisstovan, Faroe Islands: Sigurð reported that the situation on Faroe Islands is very similar to what has been reported from others. The number of cases is relatively large, but the growth is currently slow. Everyone is working from home. They are using digital tools as e.g. teams to stay connected. The organisation is trying to keep business as usual meaning e.g. that customer services is still open but with limited opening hours.

NLS Finland: There are currently around 700 cases in the country and most of the in Helsinki region. The country believe that they are around two weeks after central Europe. There are many restrictions since people's health is priority. More than 10 people at the same is prohibited which also affects the cadastral services since it is difficult to organise meetings with customers. Customers are also often with the age 70 or above. The pessimistic (or realistic) estimation is that there might be restrictions up to 18 months from now. NLS knows that there will be economical effects and notes that productivity decreases. This means that income is lower. NLS has established a crisis management team lead by DG and this team meets every day. Employees are working from home and this until at least the 13th of April. Customer service is only available by having an appointment. Travel is prohibited until end of May. NLS has started to investigate having new laws or at the minimum have changes in the law for a period of time. They want the laws to be more adopted to digital world and not so much based on paper and analogue signatures.

The general feeling was that the discussion was good and there is a need at Storchefsmötet to do a recap on the situation in respective country. The recap should include thoughts on the effect on the organisations, productivity, economy, governmental support packages and their effect on our sector but perhaps also try to look for some positive effects. The use of digital tools and all the restrictions can lead to that we find new ways of working which will and can be used in the future.

EuroGeographics and UNGGIM: Europe

Kristian updated the meeting about the current situation, focus and way forward with EuroGeographics and its management board. Kristian had already sent out a detailed email and referred to it. Mick Cory is leaving EuroGeographics in the end of 2020 and the recruitment process has started. The profile for the recruitment is under discussion within the Management Board. It is a discussion if the person should have the strengths mainly within the focus areas of EuroGeographics or having the strengths in the representation skill as communication / networking / liaison with stakeholder and members. Both aspects would of course be best but there probably

needs to be an idea what is most important for EuroGeographics. EuroGeographics is also focusing on its new strategy including a new business model regarding the geospatial information that it is affecting the financial situation. The major change for the organisation is moving from data sales to data access as users, in general, are not interested in paying for data as public sector in general is moving towards open data. A strategy discussion is planned for the beginning of June.

Kristian's mandate in the Management Board end this year but it was a clear vote from the Nordic DGs to support Kristian for another term. He is happy to continue, and the meeting noted that this suggestion should be confirmed at Storcheftsmötet in September.

Susanne is member of the UNGGIM:Europe Executive Committee and reported on the hot topics there. The discussions at the ExCom is also very much about defining the existence of this organisation. What is UNGGIM:Europe supposed to do? As this is the European part of UN-GGIM members represent their country as members of the UN and not, as in EuroGeographics, representing their organisations. Yet, the participants do mix this at several occasions, especially as several representatives are representing their country or organisation in both UNGGIM:Europe and in EuroGeographics. There is e.g. a clear need of a communication platform, and the communication platform needs to be based on purpose, focus and aim of the organisation. Having a joint secretariat with EuroGeographics is effective but also challenges and not helping to see the differences between these organisations. The main drivers in these discussions are currently Sweden, Netherlands and UK. The UN High Level forum in April is cancelled due to the Convid-19 situation and the UNGGIM:Europe General Assembly is also uncertain.

In the general discussion that followed these two introductions Pia noted that if the UNGGIM:Europe is clear on its terms of reference than the definition for EuroGeographics will be easier to define. All agreed and Kristian emphasized that UN-bodies should work more on a broader political level. Susanne reminded us that there is a major challenge that the same people represents both organisations, sometime doing so also at the same meetings, and this confuses others. To strengthen the Nordic role in the European context Anne-Cathrine noted that there also other organisations that we are involved in and that it would be good at some stage to have a discussion and strategy on this. Eydís reminded us that we are working much closer also with statistics today and that they should also be included in that discussion. To start with, Pia suggest to the meeting that we should coordinate us even more before the more major and important meeting.

The Nordic cooperation

Mikael presented on behalf of NIC group and started to discuss working groups and networks. Working groups are characterized by working with issues related to core tasks and known challenges in our institutions. Therefore, the topics in a working group should be relevant for all institutions. The working groups shall report to Storcheftsmötet on their progress and focus. The directors have previously decided on the following four working groups:

- Land Mapping

- Cadastre
- Land Registration
- It and development

Networks are characterized by working with highly specialized topics where it is typically not possible to exchange experience and have sparring discussion on a national level. The networks can work with specific tasks, but exchange of experience and best practice should be the main elements in the networks. Since the topics are specialized, it will not always be relevant for all organizations to participate in all networks as well as some networks have participants from outside the mapping organizations. The networks report yearly on their main activities via the NIC group.

The current networks are;

- Nordic Standardization Group (sub group of IT and development)
- Nordic Open Source initiative (NOSIN) (sub group of IT and development)
- Nordic NMA knowledge exchange on remote data acquisition
- Nordic adresseforum
- KrisGIS
- Inspire
- Competence and governance
- Nordic Commission on Geodesy (NKG)

The networks are working on their own or as parts of a working group. Several of the networks have collaborations with other organisations.

From the discussion among the Director Generals it was clear that;

- The IT and development group should update their mandate and focus on what is unique for them, for us and what they should focus on. Currently it is too wide and vague.
- Working group on Cadastre is important but their focus and mandate is not easily understood when reading the document.
- The working group names are very static.
- Most groups are good and valid, but we do not need more groups. There are already too many.
- Collaboration between working group needs to increase and how can this be facilitated?
- The NIC-group should be asked to ensure crispier description on how the working groups can contribute to the organisations in the future.
- The NIC-group should be asked to investigate on how to incorporate the Networks more in the Working groups (if needed) to ensure that the number of groups are limited.
- “Competence and government” is a group that Denmark is not involved in and will as in Denmark there are more appropriate national groups. Some countries strongly wish that the group continues as a Network. The DG decided that the Network should identify which topics it should cover, who the participants should be and what the future focus should be.

Three challenges were discussed at the meeting that could form ad-hoc groups.

- **Machine Learning.** The DGs considered to establish this ad-hoc group and Denmark will take the lead. There is, however, a need to identify the “crucial question” that should be addressed by the group as well as a time plan for this.
- **PSI / High Value Dataset.** Sweden believed that it is too early for this group, but several other countries asked for it to be established. The “crucial question” needs though to be defined. Sweden and Finland to discuss on who will take the lead.
- **New technologies:** The DGs believe that the use of new technology is always very interesting but for an ad-hoc group the title is too wide. NIC is asked to make the title more focused and the mission more specific.

From Storchefsmötet in 2019 two reports were requested.

- The GDPR group is thanked for their report and effort and the DGs believe that the group has done what was asked from them. The group is therefore closed.
- The Geodesy group has also contributed with a report. As indicated in the report, the group is not agreeing on the framework for the continuation. The DG decided to stop the group here and not continue. There is a strong feeling that the different opinions among the involved countries will continue and overshadow the intent of the work.

Anne-Cathrine asked if there is an interest in the pilot project mentioned in the Geodesy group report. The pilot project is called The Nordic Dynamic Road Cloud. Several countries indicated that they need to understand more about it before they could decide whether to participate or not. Norway will continue to invite the other Nordic countries and to explain more about the content, budget and time plan.

The Nordic Strategy

Our current Nordic strategy is from 2016 and it was raised if there is a need for an update. It was decided not to but NIC is asked to present an update on the implementation at the coming Storchefsmötet.

Storchefsmötet 2020

Sweden do hope that it will be able to organise a face to face meeting in Gävle starting the evening of 31st August and ending in the afternoon of the 2nd September.

Proposed items for the agenda are;

- Reflections on the effects of the Corona pandemic
- Discussion on agenda and participation.
- EuroGeographics Management Board, Nordic representative
- Key note by Johnny Welle, the new DG of Kartverket in Norway
- Implementations of the Nordic Strategy
- NMCAs and statistics, increased cooperation in future

Everybody is asked to add further topics for the Storchefsmötet 2020. The agenda will be discussed and decided by e-mail correspondence.

Any other business

Eydís raised the question on the upcoming Arctic SDI Board meeting in late June and if it should be cancelled or moved already now. The meeting decided that it should be kept in the calendars and that a decision should be taken a month from now.

Closing the meeting

Susanne thanked all for a productive Skype meeting. NIC was thanked for the work they are had done preparing some of the material.