

Knowledge sharing about cadastral and land administration systems in the Nordic countries.

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SUMMARY

In-depth knowledge about the land administration system is important when working with cadastre and land management. Western Norway University of Applied Sciences (HVL) offers a three-year bachelor's degree program mainly focusing on traditional land surveying and a two-year master's degree program in Land Management. In both cases, the overall focus is on the Norwegian domestic situation, but the students are also introduced to land administration systems in an international context. The Nordic countries have close ties and cooperations in many areas and tend to appear to the outside world as homogeneous, with strong political, cultural, and to a great extent linguistic bonds. When looking at the land administration systems, however, we find that the countries have developed in different directions over the last centuries.

While in some Nordic countries surveying and mapping of property boundaries started as early as in the 1600s, in Norway this activity first came in place as a nationwide activity around 1960 in rural areas. In Iceland building a national cadastral map is an ongoing activity. Consequently, the surveyors' and their capacity and authority have developed differently across national borders. While in Finland, Sweden, and Denmark the surveyors have the authority to determine the legal boundary and decide when there is a boundary dispute, this is not the case in Norway and Iceland. In Norway and Iceland, cadastral surveying is more of a technical issue, and determination of the property boundary when a boundary dispute arises is a legal task. The methods for data capturing have of course changed through the centuries and consequently, the completeness and accuracy of the cadastral maps vary between the countries. While the cadastral coverage is more complete in the countries with a long cadastral mapping history, the coverage of cadastral maps varies in Norway and Iceland. Thus the functions of the cadastre will vary.

To strengthen the student's understanding of how land administration systems develop and what the current differences in the Nordic countries entail, HVL organized a Nordic seminar on land administration in November 2022. The seminar brought together speakers from Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden who presented the main aspects and peculiarities of the respective land administration system. Some other examples from within and outside of Europe were also touched upon. The seminar was well attended by the students, and especially those who had taken a field course in cadastral surveying were enthusiastic participants. The seminar is expected to contribute to an increased interest among the students in international land administration issues and thus also an understanding of differences across national borders. In addition, by becoming aware of the strengths and weaknesses of

various systems the students should be able to reflect on current trends of development both nationally and regionally.

In the presentation, the concept and main themes of last year's seminar will be described in light of the relevant bachelor and master studies at HVL. Some key elements that distinguish the different countries' land administration systems will also be shown and discussed, partly in relation to international initiatives aimed at establishing land administration systems in developing countries.

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