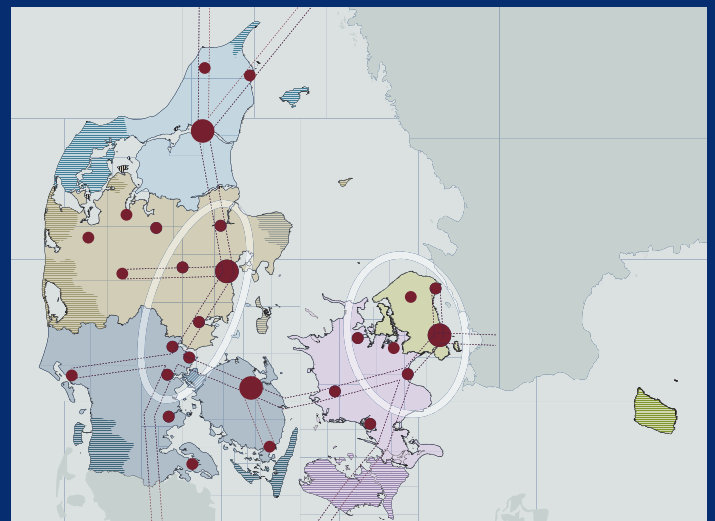


The 2006 national planning report – in brief

The new map of Denmark

– spatial planning
under new conditions



Ministry of the Environment, Denmark
The 2006 national planning report – in brief
The new map of Denmark – spatial planning under new conditions

Publisher

Ministry of the Environment, Denmark

Editors

Danish Forest and Nature Agency, Spatial Planning Department

Translation

David Breuer

Map design

Nina Kampmann, Etcetera Design

Figure design

Lars H. Olesen, Xpress Reklame

Photographs

Lisbeth Øhrgaard, p. 7

Polfoto, p. 23

Graphic design

Page Leroy-Cruce

Printing

Schultz Grafisk A/S

ISBN

87-7279-727-4

This report is available online at
www.skovognatur.dk

Paper copies of the report can be ordered from

Frontlinien

Rentemestervej 8

DK-2400 Copenhagen NV

Denmark

Telephone +45 70 12 02 11

E-mail frontlinien@frontlinien.dk

©2006 by the Ministry of the Environment, Denmark. All rights reserved. Published 2006

Printed in Denmark

Quotations may be made from this publication with appropriate attribution.

Contents

Preface (to the Danish edition)	4
The world is opening up	8
– spatial planning must contribute to preparing Denmark for change	
The need for common objectives	10
– balancing local and national considerations	
Planning for economic growth	10
– the vision of the Government of Denmark for spatial development	
New responsibilities	13
– the reform of local government structure gives the municipalities new autonomy	
Development in all parts of Denmark	15
– the significance of the national planning report for different parts of the country	
Annex: Denmark's reform of local government structure	21

Preface

– to the Danish edition

Seeing and hearing the reactions to the draft 2006 national planning report has been a very positive experience. The comments on the draft report clearly contradict anyone who might have thought that Denmark's municipalities are uninterested in planning for high-quality surroundings. On the contrary, there is great support for the basic viewpoint that Denmark will only remain a beautiful and well-functioning country if it consciously and offensively makes use of planning. A beautiful country does not conserve itself. This requires political will and the courage to stick to some overall priorities and principles. There is therefore good reason to thank everyone who has participated in the debate since I issued the draft 2006 national planning report in early March 2006.

It is especially pleasing that many of the new committees responsible for the process of municipal amalgamation have overcome the busy period before the major reform of local government structure enters into force on 1 January 2007 in order to contribute to the debate. All five preparatory committees for the new administrative regions and regional councils have also found the time to submit constructive comments on the draft report. This is a good sign for the future and the new collaboration, both within the new regions and between the state and the new municipal councils. In this connection, I am pleased about the numerous comments that support the report's message on the more dialogue-oriented partnership of the future. Instead of the state vetoing municipal planning, it is important to establish a constructive climate in which the partners can discuss the challenges at an early stage of the process and in which municipalities have a clearly defined autonomy for local planning based on some overall principles for spatial development.

During the period of public comment, the discussion about the 2006 national planning report and thereby about the future spatial structuring of Denmark was very broad and ended up focusing on much more than the spatial structure. Spatial planning of our surroundings can naturally not stand alone. Education, economic development and support for such measures as innovation are very important, and

the Government of Denmark focuses carefully on these aspects in other reports. Nevertheless, examining the spatial structure often heightens awareness of the current and future roles of Denmark's various regions, cities and towns. It is important to note that the nature of economic growth differs in different parts of Denmark: city regions, town regions and small-town regions (peripheral areas). The national planning report therefore also states that each area should develop based on the prerequisites of that area.

Further, several of the comments on the national planning report include specific proposals falling within the jurisdiction of other ministries. I will ensure that these proposals are forwarded to the appropriate ministries to provide inspiration and any follow-up. In addition, the numerous constructive comments can also be used in other contexts within planning related to nature and the environment.

The reform of local government structure in Denmark will renew spatial planning, with increased decentralized autonomy for the municipalities combined with more prominent spatial planning at the national level. The reform will include a continuing high level of protection for nature, the environment and the landscape and townscape. In the draft national planning report I therefore presented five goals that will apply to spatial planning in Denmark.

- Rural and urban areas should be distinct.
- Development should benefit all of Denmark.
- Spatial planning should be based on respect for the identity of cities and towns, nature, the environment and the landscape and townscape.
- Spatial planning and investment in infrastructure should be closely integrated.
- Spatial planning should be comprehensive.

I am pleased to note that these five goals have been extremely well received. The public comments provide very extensive support for, for example, the revival of the classic planning principle of maintaining a distinction between the countryside and the city.


It is decisive for me that spatial planning be used to maintain Denmark's strengths. Fortunately, many people agree with this. Numerous comments thus support the goal of daring to promote quality – in cities and towns, in the countryside and in the landscape and townscape. This includes good and well-functioning cities and towns as workplaces and residences, open landscapes and coherent natural areas in which people can explore and engage in recreational activities. The qualities of the various regions of Denmark can and should differ. Denmark should not be made uniform.

Denmark should continue to seek the optimal balance between human activities and consideration for nature, the environment and the landscape and townscape in each settlement region. I am therefore looking forward to the results of the six initiatives the Ministry of the Environment will start in partnership with municipal councils, regional councils and other actors. These initiatives will:

- ensure that appropriately located land is available for businesses, housing and recreational areas in Greater Copenhagen;
- ensure a well-functioning integration of urban growth and infrastructure in Sjælland;

- develop the urban corridor between Randers and Kolding and ensure appropriate landscapes between these towns;
- build town networks as frameworks for growth and innovation in the town regions;
- strengthen development in small-town regions through such measures as dialogue projects that build on local strengths and natural qualities; and
- investigate the role of villages in the new municipalities and analyse the barriers to the development of villages based on the qualities of the place and the participation of the local community.

The Government of Denmark hopes that the 2006 national planning report will function as a good starting-point for the efforts to develop the new municipal plans and regional spatial development plans and will provide great inspiration for the new forms of partnership between the state, the regional councils and the municipal councils after the reform of local government structure enters into force on 1 January 2007.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Connie Hedegaard', with a stylized, flowing script.

Connie Hedegaard
Minister for the Environment



The world is opening up

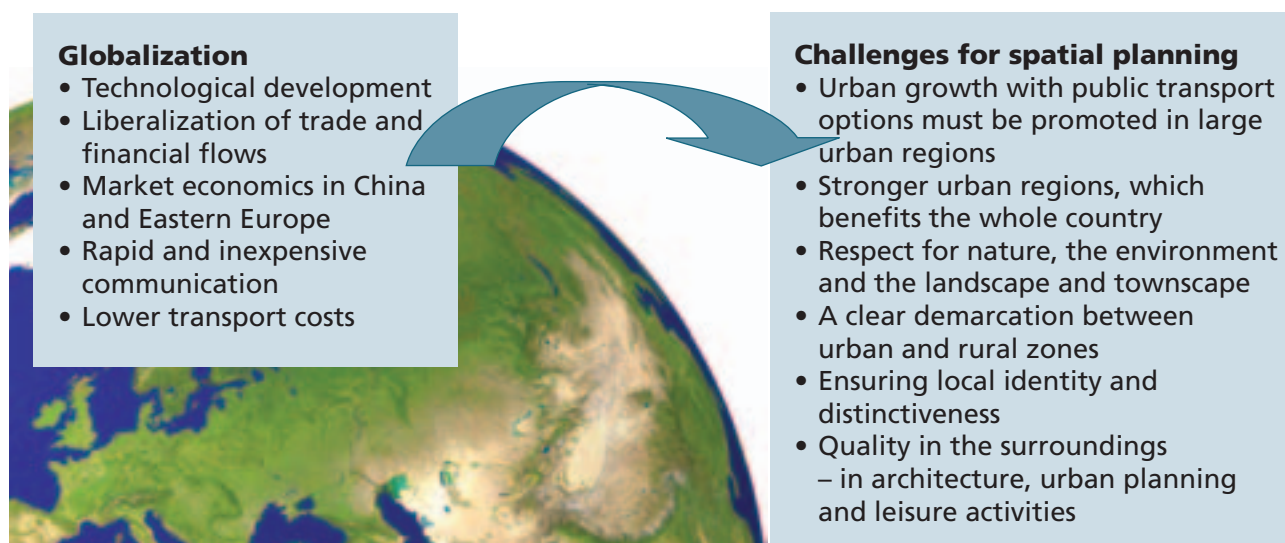
– spatial planning must contribute to preparing Denmark for change

The world is opening up. Denmark is trading more with other countries, communicating across national borders and investing in other countries. Workplaces move between countries. Denmark is well prepared to adapt to these changes. But getting globalization to continue to positively influence Denmark and its economy requires that Denmark strengthen its ability to create innovation and to develop solutions that add value and cannot easily be copied. The Government of Denmark stated this in New Goals, the platform for the Government of Denmark formed in 2005.

Innovation and value-creating solutions require high quality in education, research efforts and entrepreneurial environments. Further, they place demands on spatial planning, which must preserve Denmark's special qualities and nature and also create a favourable framework that attracts such actors as companies, knowledge institutions and employees and ensures that they thrive.

Good spatial planning decisively affects how Denmark's population experiences their daily lives. For decades, spatial planning has created coherence in everyday working, leisure and family life all around Denmark. Spatial planning has created a framework that has ensured urban development with vibrant cities and towns, retail trade opportunities close to people's homes, mobility for business and commuters and much more.

The municipal planning of the future should continue to ensure this coherence for each municipality's residents and companies. But in addition, the reform of local government structure will give the 98 municipal councils together with the five regional councils and the regional economic growth forums greater responsibility for ensuring that regional economic growth is promoted and especially that Denmark is prepared to thrive in the heightened global competition. Efforts by the state alone are not sufficient.



Denmark's spatial planning respects nature and the environment, clearly distinguishes urban and rural areas and promotes integration between homes, business and infrastructure, which gives Denmark a good position in global competition. A report from the Nordic Council of Ministers says that respect for nature and the environment is precisely one of the main reasons why the Nordic countries perform relatively well in competitiveness, applying technology and creativity. Spatial planning should thus continue to contribute to ensuring sustainable development.

Fig. A. Globalization influences and changes the prerequisites for strategic spatial planning in Denmark.

Cities and towns play a major role in the knowledge society. Denmark can only strengthen its global position by creating cities that can compete at the European level. The cities must promote economic growth but also ensure that this growth benefits the whole country.

In and around Denmark's cities and towns, this means, for example, focusing on creating increased quality in housing and urban development and viewing this in the context of creating flexible transport without congestion, creating easy access to nature and cultural experiences and continuing to create balance between economic growth and protecting nature and the environment.

Many of the settlement regions of Denmark with little population and a lower population density have more difficult prerequisites for growth. The regional councils and the regional growth forums in partnership with the municipal councils and others should therefore build bridges from the cities and towns to the rural districts and small-town regions such that all regions of Denmark become an integral part of development and growth – such as through innovation in food businesses. In addition, the Government of Denmark has already provided opportunities to strengthen special economic development opportunities in small-town regions, such as by giving priority to grants from the European Union Structural Funds and by designating more summer cottage areas. Further, Denmark should strive to become even better at taking advantage of the potential of nature, the environment and the landscape and townscape with which many of the small-town regions have been favoured.

The need for common objectives

– balancing local and national considerations

The reform of local government structure entering into force on 1 January 2007 will give the municipal councils in the 98 new amalgamated municipalities new competencies and increase their autonomy, including in spatial planning. The municipal councils have assumed the planning authority for rural areas and will thus be assigned responsibility for creating coherence in spatial planning. The reform thus allows the new municipal councils to increasingly influence development based on their knowledge of strengths, challenges and practical matters in each municipality.

It is also important that this planning be conducted based on the same general principles in all of Denmark. This is intended to ensure uniform administration. The prerequisites for development, however, differ in different parts of Denmark. This national planning report therefore recommends differentiated spatial planning and indicates overall differences in the prerequisites for economic growth in five types of settlement region in Denmark. The national planning report thus describes the current trends in development that influence future spatial planning and presents the views of the Government of Denmark on how these trends should and can be handled differently in different types of settlement region.

The differentiated planning should thus strive towards finding a new and decisive balance between local development potential and common objectives and principles.

The 2006 national planning report is an important initial aspect of striving to find this balance. Other important parts will be the continuing dialogue between the Ministry of the Environment and the new municipalities as well as the overview of national interests in municipal planning the Ministry will publish in 2006. Finally, a national planning directive will be issued for spatial planning in Greater Copenhagen after a period of public comment and debate in autumn 2006.

The Government of Denmark is further initiating new dialogue projects with the municipal councils and the new regional councils on implementing the overall and general principles for spatial planning in Denmark.

Planning for economic growth

– the vision of the Government of Denmark for spatial development

The 2006 national planning report is the vision of the Government of Denmark for spatial development in Denmark. The Government of Denmark has outlined five goals for spatial planning to ensure coherence between the decentralized planning in the municipalities and the national planning. These goals are intended to help to create the type of country the Government desires.

Rural and urban areas should be distinct

The boundary between urban and rural areas tends to gradually dissolve in many areas with economic growth. When urban development has broken up the landscape, its aesthetics are changed for good. This development must be managed; undesired urban sprawl should be avoided. Open landscapes, natural features and attractive townscapes are decisive for Denmark's potential to ensure good living

conditions in Denmark and to attract companies, employees and tourists in the future. Further, access to nature and tranquil landscapes near cities are important for most of Denmark's population.

No one should be in doubt as to where the town ends and the countryside begins. Developed areas should be relatively densely built so that other areas can be free of development. It is important that towns and especially cities maintain their density and thereby their urban qualities and urban identity.

Denmark should provide opportunities for the people who want to live a hectic life in a big city and for those who want to live a tranquil life in the countryside. Calm and tranquillity comprise limited resources that should be protected and should, also in the future, be a public good and a quality that everyone can experience regardless of where they live. This is a challenge in a small country. Spatial planning should ensure diversity and continue to prevent everything from becoming uniform.

Development should benefit all of Denmark

A strong and competitive capital city is an important prerequisite for Denmark's spatial development. Denmark must have a capital that can attract companies, jobs and employees in global competition. An optimal spatial planning framework for international competition must be ensured for the capital, and this planning must show the will to give Greater Copenhagen and the Øresund Region the necessary potential and the necessary impetus.

Denmark has other city regions with strong international positions in the knowledge society, such as Aarhus and the Triangle Region (centred around Fredericia, Kolding and Vejle) in eastern Jylland. Utilizing and continuing to develop the positions of strength of city regions is decisive for economic growth potential in all of Denmark.

Such measures as qualitatively developing natural and cultural features can provide new strength with the new, larger municipalities, especially in the parts of Denmark with low population density, in which the municipalities cover more land area.

The five new administrative regions have the size and weight to make a forceful effort. The regional councils will be responsible for planning how business, homes and natural features are developed in each of the five administrative regions.

Spatial planning should be based on respect for nature and the environment

Spatial planning should ensure the optimal state of nature and the environment. Nature and the environment are an important asset for Denmark. The coasts and the countryside must therefore be protected. Denmark should have robust natural areas that are coherent across administrative boundaries, and landscape features should continue to extend over large geographical distances. The municipal councils should therefore include both the local perspective and a perspective across municipal boundaries in their planning for nature and the environment.

Valuable natural, landscape and cultural environment features can be used actively to promote Denmark's development potential. Development must take place with respect for these valuable features so that they do not depreciate but are developed qualitatively. Many settlement regions in Denmark have substantial undeveloped land available for urban development in existing plans that can meet many years of expected demand. Denmark should continue to strive for urban regeneration of previously developed land instead of using greenfield land. The municipal councils should engage in continual dialogue with the Ministry of the Environment to ensure balance between using and protecting nature and the landscape and townscape.

Agriculture, market gardening and forestry greatly influence the development of many rural districts. In addition to producing food and contributing to the economy and employment, they should increasingly adopt broad consideration for nature, the environment and their neighbours. The municipal councils and regional councils should therefore ensure in their planning that these economic activities have the opportunity for continuing to develop in a sustainable direction. New and modern environmental regulation of livestock rearing from January 2007 is intended to support this so that the agriculture of the future can be optimally located in relation to neighbours, nature and the landscape. A further challenge is fitting agriculture's new, large production facilities into the landscape as they replace and render superfluous many existing agricultural buildings in the coming years.

Spatial planning and investment in infrastructure should be closely integrated

Economic development and increasing affluence increase the pressure on Denmark's infrastructure. Well-functioning transport infrastructure without great congestion problems is an important parameter in global competition. Denmark has a good starting-point with such facilities as Copenhagen Airport, the Port of Aarhus, the transport centres in Taulov and Padborg, the Copenhagen Malmö Port, a dense network of motorways and railways, the fixed links across the Storebælt and across the Øresund and the Copenhagen Metro.

Future spatial planning should contribute to ensuring that urban development takes place in areas in which public transport or other transport investment can support this development. This means that large office workplaces, educational institutions and other destinations that attract employees and visitors from a large catchment area should be located so that they are easily accessible by public transport. Further, the designation of new land for business development along motorways should be restricted and mainly be reserved for companies with a substantial transport component.

Spatial planning should be comprehensive

Most of Denmark's municipalities have become larger through amalgamation as a result of the reform of local government structure. This means that the new municipal plans need to consider broader scope, including such considerations as functionality and life in each town or city, interaction between towns, the dynamics between town and country within each municipality and how to protect nature and the environment across municipal boundaries. The municipalities' size and the development desires of the municipal councils, the development plans of the regional councils and the dialogue with the Ministry of the Environment on overall

DENMARK'S PLANNING SYSTEM FROM 2007

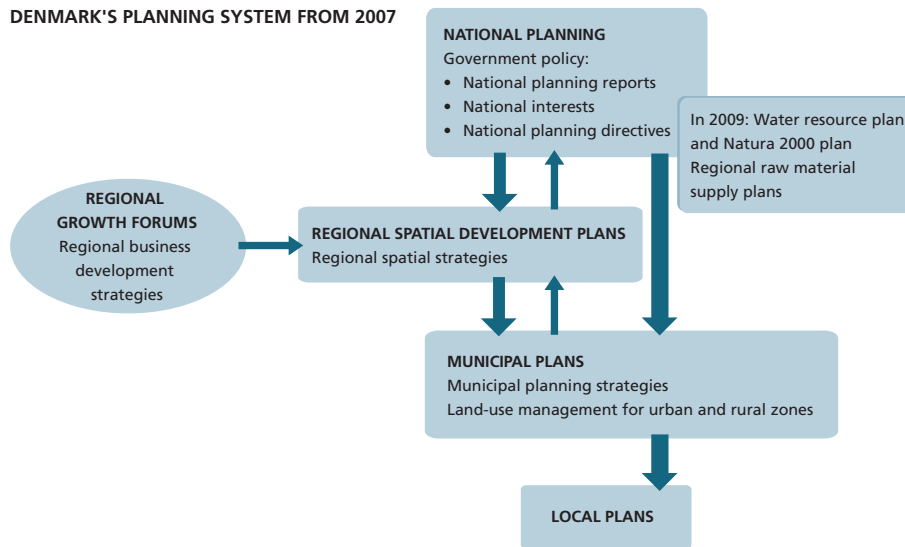


Fig. B. Denmark's planning system after the reform of local government structure enters into force on 1 January 2007.

national interests should ensure that local considerations will not counteract the striving for quality in spatial planning and a comprehensive approach. Municipal plans should contribute to ensuring that Denmark has a network of cities and towns that can serve as vibrant centres for their hinterlands. The functions of cities and towns – quality, potential and experiences – will be an important factor in development that should be an important focus of attention.

New responsibilities

– the reform of local government structure gives the municipalities new autonomy

The reform of local government structure imposes new prerequisites for spatial planning. The municipal councils will have the task of converting the general planning guidelines and vision into actual spatial planning. The state will issue general guidelines for planning; the regional councils, in cooperation with the municipal councils, will present a regional spatial strategy in the regional spatial development plan: the overall spatial structure, nature and environment, business including tourism, employment, education and culture.

The municipal councils will thus have a prominent role in spatial planning. The municipal councils will no longer depend on another public authority – previously the county councils and the Greater Copenhagen Authority – adopting a regional plan when the municipal council wants to, for example, zone greenfield land for urban growth. This increased flexibility provides enhanced potential to create more comprehensive planning solutions across urban and rural zones. The revised Planning Act will thus give the municipal councils responsibility for preparing a comprehensive and coordinated plan for land use in towns and in the countryside. Further, the municipalities will assume more responsibility for several complex tasks, such as locating enterprises generating substantial pollution, waste-treatment facilities, energy-generation facilities and other installations. Based on a comprehensive assessment of development in the municipality, the municipal plan will contain guidelines for numerous topics that have previously been managed within regional planning. In addition, the municipal councils are assuming authority pursuant to

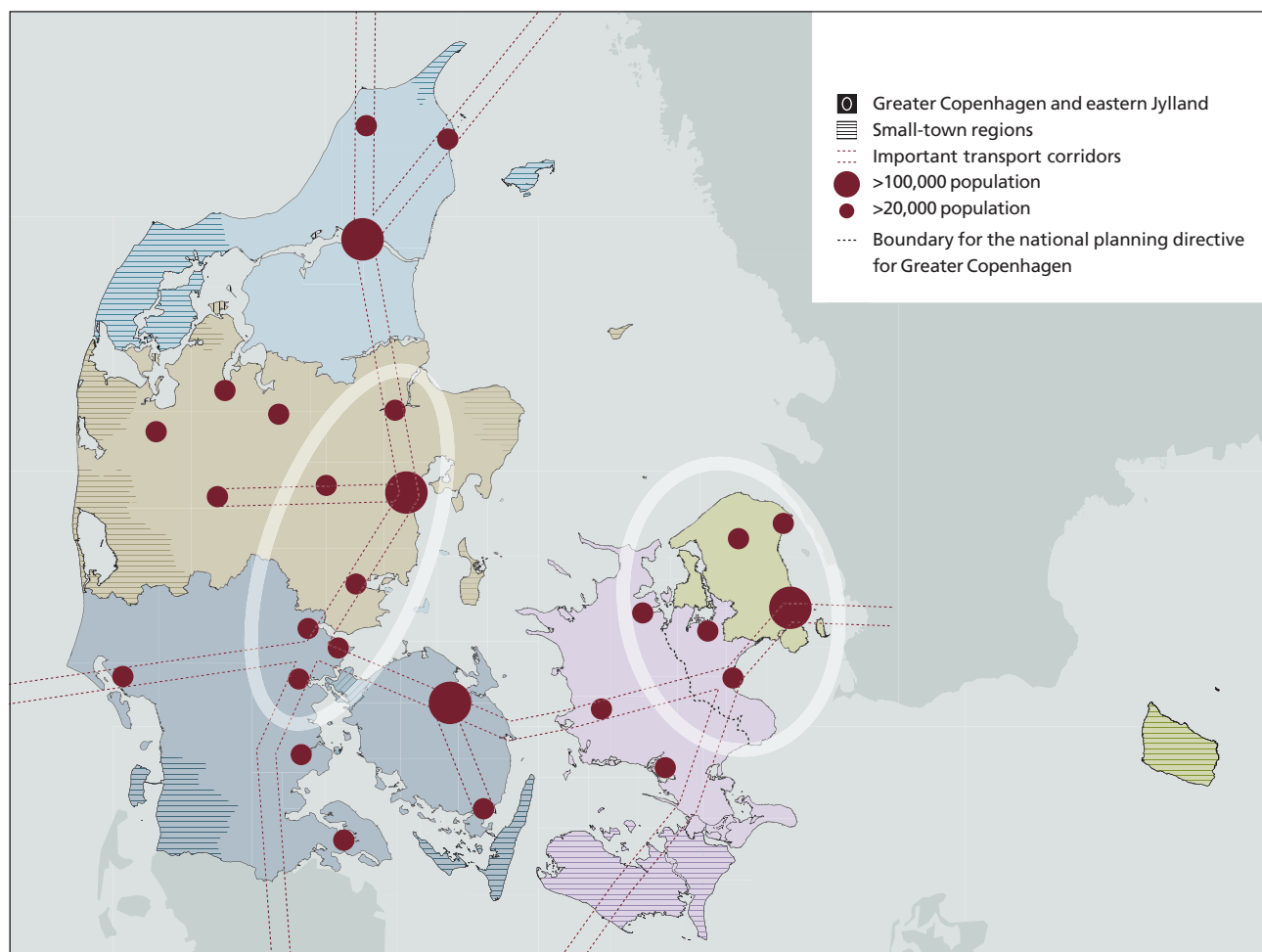
legislation governing several sectors, such as nature protection, environmental protection and roads. In the future, the municipal councils – and not the regional councils – will be responsible for ensuring that land use is regulated in accordance with the overall national interests.

The new planning competencies will give the municipal councils good opportunities to integrate comprehensive and local considerations into spatial planning within the framework of the overall national interests. Differentiated planning, which develops each community based on local strengths, competencies and challenges, will be enhanced. The potential of municipal councils to assess what type of development is appropriate will be improved because the municipalities are larger. Further, the ability to realize the ideas will grow. Nevertheless, it is also important that the municipal councils mutually discuss the topics in the municipal plans that have an overall national or regional impact. Denmark's valuable landscape, natural and environmental features seldom follow municipal boundaries and therefore often require cooperation between municipal councils on protection.

As part of the 2006 national planning report, the Ministry of the Environment intends to strengthen the continual dialogue with the municipalities on what is possible and appropriate. The aim is to establish partnership that minimizes the need for the state to veto municipal plans. Nevertheless, the state will be obligated to veto municipal plans in accordance with the revised Planning Act if they contradict the overall national interests.

The 2006 national planning report presents a vision for the spatial development of all of Denmark and the international interests in planning in the various parts of Denmark. Later in 2006, the national planning report will be followed up by a report outlining the specific national interests in municipal planning. This overview will reflect the existing framework regulating municipal planning for the entire state and will describe the more detailed framework for the municipal planning efforts of the municipal councils and thereby for the considerations the municipal councils should incorporate in their plans to avoid a state veto. The national planning directive for Greater Copenhagen is the third planning document the state will publish in 2006. It will convert the special provisions governing Greater Copenhagen in the revised Planning Act and the relevant parts of the 2005 regional plan for Greater Copenhagen of the Greater Copenhagen Authority to binding regulations for planning governing the 34 new municipal councils in Greater Copenhagen.

The reform of local government structure will strengthen the state's potential to monitor local development and to understand local needs. The Ministry of the Environment is establishing seven new regional environmental centres dispersed throughout Denmark that will ensure that the municipal councils take responsibility for overall national and societal interests in preparing their municipal plans.



Development in all parts of Denmark

– the significance of the national planning report for different parts of the country

This national planning report categorizes Denmark into five types of settlement regions: Greater Copenhagen and the Øresund Region; the rest of Sjælland; eastern Jylland; town regions; and small-town regions.

This categorization into five types of settlement regions summarizes the geographically differentiated main challenges facing spatial planning in various parts of Denmark. These challenges differ depending on the size of the towns, the state of the local economy, the relations between town and country and the overall service and economic functions each town and region provides nationally and internationally.

From a geographical perspective (Fig. C), Denmark is thus divided into two metropolitan regions and numerous small cities and towns with their hinterlands. Eastern Jylland is starting to develop into a single urban corridor. Sjælland is one coherent labour market with Copenhagen as the centre. Odense, Aalborg and several towns outside the two metropolitan areas are centres in their respective regions, and the small-town regions do not have any town with more than 20,000 inhabitants.

Fig. C. Settlement and geographical features of Denmark's five administrative regions (distinguished by colour).

The five new administrative regions overlap these settlement features. Each administrative region includes a mixture of various types of cities, towns and small-town regions. Each new regional council will be responsible for creating coherence between cities and towns and the various types of settlement regions in each administrative region in cooperation with the municipal councils in that administrative region. The regional spatial development plan will reflect the duty the regional councils have to comprehensively assess the future spatial strategy for the cities, towns, rural districts and small-town regions within each administrative region.

Denmark's two metropolitan regions and several other economic growth hubs comprise the general starting-point for the dynamics within the administrative regions. The cities and towns of each administrative region need to be linked in city networks that can collaborate to strengthen the competitiveness of these administrative regions in the knowledge society. The town networks will contribute to enabling Denmark's administrative regions to be more competitive internationally and to ensuring balance in the national urban system.

The spatial development strategies of the regional councils and the specific spatial planning of the municipal councils should be in accordance with the objectives and expectations of the Government of Denmark in relation to the spatial development of Denmark. The next section outlines the most important government objectives and expectations, with the aim of achieving joint efforts in spatial planning by the state, regional councils and municipal councils in the five types of settlement regions in Denmark.

Specific state initiatives that will be initiated as a direct result of the 2006 national planning report are described after each subsection.



Greater Copenhagen and the Øresund Region

National priority: ensuring that spatial planning strengthens the international competitiveness of Greater Copenhagen.

International surveys confirm that Greater Copenhagen and the Øresund Region have a good foundation for becoming a locomotive for all of Denmark in the global competition between metropolises. Cooperation between Denmark and Sweden should be extended to take advantage of the development potential in the Øresund Region. Strengthening the international competitiveness of the Øresund Region and Greater Copenhagen is in Denmark's national interest. Greater Copenhagen faces special spatial planning challenges in four areas.

Transport challenges and future urban development. The Government of Denmark wants to maintain the overall principle that activities that generate substantial demand for transport should be located near railway stations. Transport congestion is increasing in many parts of Greater Copenhagen, and the locations near stations should therefore be densely developed instead of dispersing urban development. Considerable land is available for building near well-served stations, and the existing opportunities for urban regeneration and urban development in the five Greater Copenhagen "fingers" (urban corridors extending radially from central Copenhagen along railway lines) should be utilized. The long-term potential for urban development in the urban fingers should be assessed. In the long term, the existing urban fingers could be extended.

Conversion of previously developed business sites. Traditional businesses should not be unnecessarily squeezed out from appropriately located business districts. Business districts should be regenerated in some places and converted in some cases. In connection with the national planning directive for Greater Copenhagen, the Ministry of the Environment will initiate a planning process with municipalities that need to regenerate or convert old business districts.

Housing development. Housing prices have been increasing, and demand for housing land is great. Nevertheless, areas for about 80,000 dwellings designated in the 2001 regional plan for Greater Copenhagen are still available, and more were designated in the 2005 regional plan. The Government of Denmark's objective is that Greater Copenhagen's housing market will be vibrant and diverse.

Recreational areas. Green spaces, recreational areas and attractive urban environments are key prerequisites for attracting companies, jobs and employees. The municipal councils should therefore give high priority to valuable landscape, natural and cultural features.

State initiatives following up the 2006 national planning report

The Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of Transport and Energy and the City of Copenhagen will establish a working group that will investigate long-term urban development and transport services in central Copenhagen.

The Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Transport and Energy, in partnership with the relevant municipal councils and regional councils, will investigate the development potential in the four towns located around stations between Roskilde, Holbæk and Ringsted and assess the opportunities to extend the Roskilde urban finger of Greater Copenhagen in the long term.

Further, the Ministry of the Environment will initiate analysis of the barriers for converting the land available for building designated by regional plans into being designated by municipal and local plans and actual housing.

Sjælland

National priority: spatial planning ensuring a well-functioning urban structure in relation to the transport infrastructure.

All of Sjælland, including Greater Copenhagen, is a large coherent labour market with extensive commuting. Ensuring a well-functioning integrated housing and labour market region in all of Sjælland is in Denmark's national interest. The most important planning challenges in Sjælland are as follows.

Avoiding undesired urban sprawl. Avoiding unnecessary urban sprawl is important because this protects recreational areas and indirectly reduces the demand for transport.

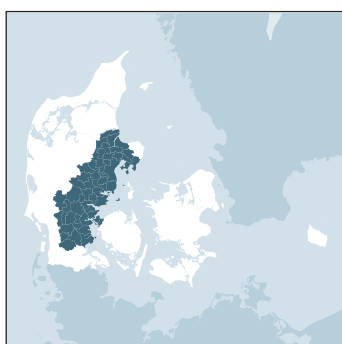
Cooperating on spatial planning as a way of reducing congestion. The process of locating functions that generate demand for transport, such as dwellings, busi-



ness districts and public institutions, should be integrated with the opportunities for public transport services.

State initiative following up the 2006 national planning report

The Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Transport and Energy will encourage dialogue between the municipal councils in Sjælland, the regional transport company for Sjælland, the regional council and the state on the future urban development in Sjælland outside greater Copenhagen, including the interaction with development in Greater Copenhagen.



Eastern Jylland

National priority: initiating long-term spatial planning that can establish an overall urban structure and ensure coherent landscapes between towns.

Eastern Jylland is coalescing into a functional conurbation with substantial population growth and a division of tasks between the towns in the urban corridor from Kolding to Randers. In fact, in the long term these may be the contours of a new city region in Denmark with more than 1 million inhabitants. Maintaining open and coherent landscapes between towns within this urban corridor is in Denmark's national interest. Development in eastern Jylland is posing two prominent challenges for spatial planning.

Ensuring quality in the landscape. The landscape in eastern Jylland is of high quality with substantial variation and good accessibility. Urban growth must not take place at the expense of the clear, welfare-generating strengths. Development should be dense where it is allowed so that other areas can be free of development. The landscape should be planned inward towards cities and towns and thereby establish a framework delimiting urban growth.

Ensuring consideration for infrastructure. Commuting is increasing, and congestion may arise. New urban districts and housing should be located to ensure a basis for good public transport services, and the designation of new business districts along motorways should mainly be reserved for companies with a substantial transport component.

State initiative following up the 2006 national planning report

The Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Transport and Energy will initiate dialogue between the involved municipal councils and regional councils and the state on the future development of the urban corridor in eastern Jylland. The dialogue will focus on how to ensure coordinated and appropriate regulation of land use in the urban corridor in eastern Jylland based on the need for creating a new framework for development.

Town regions

National priority: spatial planning being based on a comprehensive approach that supersedes the individual municipalities so that town networks can create the basis for innovation, knowledge and service.

The Government of Denmark believes that the challenges facing spatial planning in town regions can be solved in a sustainable manner within the existing spatial structure. The initiatives that should be taken in relation to development in town regions can optimally be carried out based on local debate on development at the regional and municipal levels.

Ensuring that the relatively favourable development trends in the large towns can be maintained in the long term requires developing interaction between the main towns within each of the new administrative regions. Each regional council should cooperate with the municipal councils in the administrative region in striving to establish links between the main towns such that the regional spatial development plan reflects the desires and potential of the administrative region to agree on a division of roles between the towns. The regional spatial development plans are an appropriate instrument for this purpose, and the new preparatory committees between the regional councils and their respective municipal councils should be assigned a key role. The urban identity and architecture of the main towns will be an important aspect of developing the town regions.

Business clusters have been analysed in connection with this national planning report. The municipalities can benefit by basing their planning on this analysis.

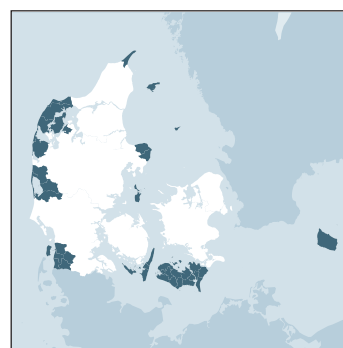
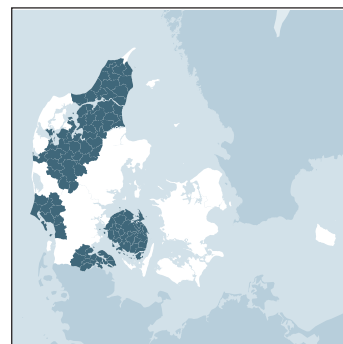
State initiative following up the 2006 national planning report

The Ministry of the Environment will initiate a project for developing a new settlement pattern in cooperation with municipal councils and regional councils so that the urban settlement pattern more accurately reflects the special qualities of the towns and the division of roles in a town network than the current hierarchical settlement pattern. One aim of this project is to inspire the regional spatial development planning.

Small-town regions

National priority: spatial planning in small-town regions emphasizing their natural qualities as an important potential for development as a supplement to efforts related to economic policy through such actors as the regional economic growth forums.

The national planning report defines small-town regions as the commuting catchment area for towns with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants that are relatively far from any larger town. The small-town regions may therefore have more difficulty in spurring economic growth than other areas of Denmark and need specific monitoring. All areas of Denmark should be attractive places to reside, live and conduct business.



Individuals and companies are increasingly focusing on valuable natural and landscape and townscape features. The more difficult prerequisites for economic growth in small-town regions may require them to innovate.

The small-town regions can also use their spatial starting-point as an advantage to strive for development through rural diversification based on their natural qualities and uniqueness, such as increased settlement, recreational experiences and tourism. Other options are efforts to protect landscapes, nature and the environment and accessibility to tranquil areas. Similarly, developing such sectors as food or converting disused agricultural buildings can provide new potential. Further, attractive holiday and leisure areas can be created that can contribute to supporting such initiatives as coastal tourism near towns without sacrificing valuable natural and cultural features.

The Ministry of the Environment would further like to investigate other methods than the current administrative framework for managing the often fluid boundaries between year-round residences and summer cottages in existing urban zones.

The Government of Denmark is monitoring how the municipal councils have used the opportunities to grant permits for building in villages and rural districts pursuant to the changes in the zoning provisions of the Planning Act in 2002. The Government of Denmark expects that this can increase activity in villages. The survey of the administration of the regulations on rural zones pursuant to the Planning Act that the Ministry of the Environment is carrying out in 2006 will more closely investigate how the municipal councils have granted permits.

State initiatives following up the 2006 national planning report

The Ministry of the Environment is initiating a dialogue project in one or more specific areas focusing on how a small-town region can actively incorporate its natural qualities and characteristic landscapes into a development strategy without ruining these valuable features. Key aspects could be surveying a municipality's existing natural, cultural and landscape features and the opportunities to use these aspects in local development.

The Ministry of the Environment is initiating a project to investigate the role of villages in the new municipalities, to analyse the barriers to their development and to discuss strategies for development based on the local distinctiveness of each village.

Annex

Denmark's reform of local government structure

A major reform of local government structure in Denmark will enter into force on 1 January 2007. The current 271 municipalities will be amalgamated and reduced to 98 municipalities. Typically, several small rural municipalities are being amalgamated under a nearby town or several towns are merging into one municipality, a polycentric municipality. The current 12 regional planning authorities (mostly county councils) are being abolished and replaced by five new administrative regions with popularly elected regional councils.

The new municipalities will comprise 2.8 municipalities on average; in some cases up to seven municipalities are being amalgamated into one, such as in the new Municipalities of Lolland, Sønderborg and Viborg.

Many of the urban municipalities in Greater Copenhagen, however, are maintaining their current boundaries and population size.

Some very large municipalities will be created in the parts of Denmark with the lowest population density. The Municipality of Ringkøbing-Skjern will be the largest in area at 1489 km². This is three times larger than the Municipality of Thisted, which previously was the municipality with the largest area.

Municipal planning

The Planning Act will be amended as part of the reform of local government structure. This will give the popularly elected municipal councils the key role in spatial planning in Denmark. The municipal councils will have the task of preparing a coherent and coordinated plan for land use in both urban and rural zones. The municipal councils will thereby assume responsibility for most of the planning tasks previously managed by the regional planning authorities.

Based on an overall assessment of development in the municipality, the municipal plan thus contains guidelines for many topics and considerations in both town and country. The topics are listed in §11a of the Planning Act, a catalogue of municipal planning tasks, and they correspond to the existing topics included in municipal plans and those previously included in the regional plans.

The municipal councils will have improved opportunities to establish objectives for development in the entire municipality and thereby ensure coherence in planning and an appropriate balance between development in cities and towns and protecting the qualities of the countryside.

The Ministry of the Environment is obligated to veto a proposal for a municipal plan if its provisions are not in accordance with regional, national and international interests. Examples include the designation of sites for development violating the regulations governing development in a zone within 3 km from the coast or if a municipal council designates land for developing a road that passes through an area significant for nature and the landscape.

Regional spatial development planning

Denmark's five new regional councils will be responsible for preparing regional spatial development plans for the administrative regions. Based on comprehensive assessment, a regional spatial development plan will provide an overall spatial strategy for the future spatial development of the cities and towns, rural districts and small-town regions in the administrative region and for nature and the environment, business, tourism, employment, education and culture. A regional spatial development plan is thus a completely new strategic planning instrument that will express what the regional council considers important for promoting economic growth and sustainable development in the administrative region. The regional spatial development plan will base its economic planning on the regional economic development strategies prepared by the regional forums on economic growth.

The regional spatial development plan will be a joint project between the municipal councils, business, the regional council and the other actors in the administrative region. The municipal councils will therefore explain how the municipal plan relates to the regional spatial development plan.

Compared with the current regional plans, a regional spatial development plan focuses more on an overall spatial strategy for regional development and will be much more oriented towards the future and action.

THE NEW MAP OF DENMARK

THE 2006 NATIONAL PLANNING REPORT



The 2006 national planning report: the new map of Denmark

– spatial planning under new conditions

After each new national election, the Minister for the Environment submits a national planning report to the Folketing (Denmark's parliament) that expresses the vision of the Government of Denmark for the future spatial development of Denmark. A draft national planning report was subject to public comment from 3 March to 21 April 2006. The final national planning report was submitted to the Folketing on 19 May 2006.

The 2006 national planning report focuses on the new conditions globalization poses for spatial planning and how spatial planning can contribute to making Denmark more competitive. It also discusses the reform of local government structure that will enter into force on 1 January 2007 and changes the division of tasks between the 98 new municipal councils, the five new regional councils and the state. The report thus proposes a method based increasingly on dialogue in which the municipal councils have clearly defined autonomy for local planning based on general principles.

The 2006 national planning report urges municipal councils, regional councils and other actors in spatial development to strive for quality in planning in towns, in the countryside and in the landscape and townscape. This includes good and well-functioning cities and towns for work and residence, open landscapes and coherent natural areas to explore and experience. The report thus discusses current trends and problems in relation to such topics as housing and economic development, urban and settlement policy and tourism.

The 2006 national planning report – in brief summarizes the full 2006 national planning report, which is available in Danish only. Both publications are available at the web site of the Spatial Planning Department (www.skovognatur.dk).