

Cadastral Development in Norway – a Comparison

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SUMMARY

The objective of this paper is the cadastral development in Norway in an international context. Focus is on cadastral mapping. The goal is to describe and compare – and by that understand the Norwegian cadastral mapping system, and identify the particular, and peculiar, aspects of this system.

An economic survey with the goal to modernize the tax cadastre was initiated in Norway in 1804-05. The survey was stopped in 1815 due to poor financial situation and resistance from the farmers. Development of the cadastral system and the surrounding institutions should take other directions than in comparable countries where nationwide cadastral surveys were carried out. Cities and towns should develop cadastral surveying on an individual basis, while in rural areas land subdivision were undertaken by lay-men.

As there were no cadastral maps outside cities, a land surveying profession did not develop. The land consolidation courts were established in 1859, to undertake the needs for modernisation of agriculture, and should produce large volumes of maps. Initiatives were taken especially around 1900 to establish economic mapping, but with no success.

After World War II there was increased focus on land use planning and control in Norway as in many other countries. A large-scale mapping program based on photogrammetry was therefore initiated about 1960 - the economic survey. The lay-men system in rural areas could not handle updating of the new economic maps, and efforts to modernize the land subdivision process were initiated, leading to the 1980 cadastral reform and nationwide cadastral surveying. The municipalities were assigned the task to undertake cadastral surveying, but without specific qualification requirements for the municipal cadastral surveyors or putting in place measures for

institutional building. From the mid-1980s and onwards, property boundaries in economic maps and survey certificates were digitized. After year 2000 this material was integrated in a new nationwide cadastral map, in force from 2010.

A parcel based cadastral map is still not in place in Norway. Many property boundaries are not registered with their boundaries in the map, and registered boundaries can have poor quality. Licensing of surveyors is still not introduced in Norway, however there is a Parliamentary decision for implementation of licensing from 2023. The number of property disputes in courts are high and increasing. The organizational structure is fragmented, with both municipalities and the land consolidation courts undertaking cadastral surveying, and the Norwegian mapping authority in an unclear role. The Norwegian development shows that modernization of a cadastral mapping system is not necessarily successful, even if great resources are invested.