



ARBEIDS- OG  
ADMINISTRASJONSDEPARTEMETET

*Ministry of Labour and Government Administration*

Goals, principles and consequences

Revised version 2001

# Central Government Information Policy



## Definitions

- **Information and communication**

These terms are often interchangeable in Norwegian. Put simply, communication describes the process and information the product or the message. Information is what is conveyed in a communication process.

- **Citizens and users**

These terms are also often used interchangeably. In the information policy citizens is often used to refer to the population as participants in the democratic process while users refers to the population, businesses and organisations as holders of rights and obligations in relation to the public authorities or as recipients of government services and benefits.



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## Preface

Norway's government information policy was adopted in 1993. We now had, for the first time, an information policy document setting out goals and principles for information and communication activities in the public administration. The information policy is now the natural basis for government information activities.

The goals and principles underlying the information policy are universal and apolitical in character. So we have found no reason to change them. However, the setting for government information and communication activities has altered dramatically since the policy was adopted. The pace of communication is rising. New technology, new media and major changes in the mix of communication channels make new demands on the information and communication effort. A better educated population has ever higher expectations of public services, including information.

Through its focus on making public services available 24 hours a day («24-hour government») and public service offices, the Government is creating new challenges for information activities in the public sector. Information, communication and administrative procedures can be handled in parallel. At the same time new technology provides new avenues for bringing information to groups that were previously excluded from ordinary communication flows.

The information policy gives direction to government information activities by focusing on the challenges and opportunities inherent in information and communication as a tool for achieving information goals. Statskonsult (Directorate for Communication and Public Management) has overall responsibility for implementing the information policy in the public sector. A number of guides have been published to assist the individual ministry and agency to this end. These are listed at the back of this booklet and are obtainable from Statskonsult.

My call goes to the entire central government sector - particularly managers. I believe we will achieve even greater success in the new millennium as a public sector that communicates with all groups of the population. Implementing the government information policy is an important step in that direction.

Oslo, October 2001  
*Jørgen Kosmo*

## **Information policy**

The government information policy comprises three goals and five guiding principles for how ministries and agencies should inform and communicate. In combination these goals and principles set premises for information and communication in the public sector.

## **Goals**

Citizens, businesses and organisations should

- enjoy universal and equal opportunities to participate in the democratic process
- be provided with information about their entitlements, obligations and opportunities
- have real access to information about government activities

Furthermore, the information policy should promote the use of communication and information as a tool for achieving government goals.

## **Guiding principles**

- the communication principle
- the principle of active information
- the coherency principle
- the principle of line management
- the principle of information as a management responsibility

## **1 Why an information policy?**

Communication is the basic premise

The public administration can only perform its tasks effectively and efficiently through an open and positive interaction with the administration's publics. That is why good communication is essential if the public administration is to perform its tasks both as executor of authority and as a producer of good, appropriate services for citizens and businesses. The Government would like to see the public sector improve its responsiveness to the needs of the population. Good communication is an important tool to that end.

The information policy is designed to enable the central government to communicate in a satisfactory and professional manner with citizens, businesses, the organisations and the public sector as a whole with a view to achieving policy goals and to performing central government management tasks effectively and efficiently. It is also designed to facilitate citizens', businesses' and organisations' contact with the authorities. The central government information policy will not regulate details of the day-to-day work, but will provide a framework for information activities as well as recommendations to guide the direction of information and communication activities of ministries and agencies.

### **Experiences with information policy**

Since the information policy was adopted in 1993, ministries and directorates have implemented it to an increasing extent. The information policy has turned information and communication into a recognised instrument for achieving central government objectives, and has helped to place the responsibility for information with agency managements. The policy has acted as the basis for information activities and as a fixed reference point for assessing the information effort. It has also resulted in an increasingly performance-oriented information regime in the sense that more weight is given to surveys, analyses, planning and evaluation of communication and information activities.

### **Laws and policy documents with a bearing on information activity**

The information policy does not exist in a vacuum. A number of laws and policy documents provide a framework for the relationship between the central government and citizens. Important values are accessibility, openness, participation, user- and citizen-orientation, service provision and service quality alongside the more traditional public administration precepts of guarantee of due process, neutrality in relation to interest groups, professional independence, equality of treatment and predictability.

The laws that primarily regulate public rights to access and guidance are the Freedom of Information Act and the Public Administration Act. Certain other laws also contain provisions on information, among them the Building and Planning Act and the Local Government Act. Since the Language Usage Act regulates the use of nynorsk and bokmål in central government, it too has consequences for informa-

tion activities. The information policy does not encompass principles or recommendations that are already regulated by law.

Information policy is closely linked with government administration policy and IT policy. The main objectives of these three policy areas essentially coincide, although the policy instruments differ.



### ○ **Freedom of Information Act**

The purpose of this Act is to regulate citizens' right of access to documents of the public administration. In principle any person has the right to inspect such documents. The Act contains a number of exceptions from the general rule, as well as provisions on how documents should be made public, and how appeals in connection with refusal of disclosure can be pursued. All exceptions from public disclosure must be made by, or pursuant to, law. Government agencies are now required to contemplate a higher degree of public disclosure than before, i.e. to consider whether a document can be published even though disclosure can be barred under the law.

*Act relating to Public Access to Documents in the Public Administration. Passed on 19 June 1970, in force on 1 July 1971.*

### ○ **Public Administration Act**

This Act is intended to ensure proper treatment of administrative matters and it gives general rules for all administrative procedure in the public administration. The public administration is required to notify all parties in a case and to present information to all parties for comment. The parties to a case have a right of access to the documents of the case. The Act also requires government agencies to provide guidance in their respective spheres. While the obligation to provide guidance applies vis-à-vis the parties to a case, the agency in question is also obligated to guide anyone who requests information about his obligations and rights in a concrete instance of relevance to him, regardless of whether or not a case is pending.

As a general rule, a government agency must give reasons its decisions. The Act also gives parties, and others with a legal interest in appealing, the right to appeal against a decision, and contains further provisions on the deadline for appeals, the content of appeals and so forth. The rules governing appeals are applicable, for example, to requests to examine documents pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act.

*Act relating to Procedure in Cases concerning the Public Administration. Passed on 10 February 1967, in force on 1 January 1970.*

### ○ **Language Usage Act**

The Act regulates the usage of the two official forms of Norwegian, nynorsk and bokmål, in the public administration. Major central government bodies are required to alternate between the two forms in information material, announcements, circulars, etc., to ensure that neither has less than 25 per cent exposure. Staff of central government agencies at the regional and local level in municipali-



ties which have opted for either form of Norwegian must employ this form for the above purposes. Civil servants whose work involves writing official documents are obliged to use nynorsk and bokmål in accordance with the rules governing civil service language usage at any time. All central government bodies are responsible for ensuring that their staff receive requisite instruction in bokmål and nynorsk within a reasonable period.

*Act on Language Usage in the Civil Service. Passed on 11 April 1980, in force on 1 January 1981.*

### ○ **Public administration policy**

National solutions in Norwegian society need to be renewed if they are to be maintained. Public administration policy is designed to meet the challenges confronting the administration in the form of a tight labour market, competent and demanding publics and demands for more effective and efficient use of public resources. The public administration and service production must be geared to citizens' needs and wishes to a greater degree, resources must be utilised better, and solutions need to be more effective and flexible. A central goal of the Government's renewal effort is to collaborate better in the service of the citizen. An important measure is the 24-hour government involving Internet solutions, telephony services and public service offices. The aim is put the bulk of communication between users and the central administration on an electronic footing. This will entail simpler administrative procedures. Those who lack Internet access can turn to public service offices.

*Statement on Public Administration policy 2001. Address to the Storting by Minister of Labour and Government Administration Jørgen Kosmo on 10 May 2001*

### ○ **IT policy**

The Government advocates providing electronic services on the Internet as the main solution for the public administration wherever this is expedient in terms of the service in question and publics' needs and legal safeguards. The vision is a public sector where IT is used to the full both to improve the efficiency and the quality of administrative procedures and the way tasks are performed. Electronic procedures and communication will be the norm, and will be accepted on a par with paper-based solutions.

The Government advocates that all public web services available at the Internet portal norge.no should be quality-assessed based on information criteria such as openness, current relevance and usability. The Government also advocates initiating a programme for electronic administrative procedures, that steps should be taken to introduce digital signatures, that rules identified as an obstacle to electronic public administration should be changed, and that reporting by businesses should be put on an electronic footing. The aim is to make e-Commerce the first-choice channel for public procurement.



# Policy

## 2 Goals

The aim of the information policy is to enable citizens, businesses and organisations to

- enjoy universal and equal opportunities to participate in the democratic process
- be provided with information about their entitlements, obligations and opportunities
- have real access to information about government activities

The policy is also designed to promote the use of information and communication as a tool for achieving policy goals.

### Further comment and challenges

Information and communication is on the one hand a means of stimulating participation in political processes and a vehicle for feedback. On the other, it can be used to increase people's knowledge and to influence their behaviour. While this may appear to be a paradox, it reflects the notion of information and communication as a tool that can legitimately be used to a variety of ends. It is important to induce citizens to participate in the shaping and development of policy and services.

Knowledge is power. Basic rights which people are not aware of cannot be used by them. To inform means to disseminate knowledge. That is why information and communication are particularly important vis-à-vis groups in the community who for various reasons have great difficulty in getting through to the public authorities. They may be individuals, groups or small businesses. Ministries and agencies need to identify groups that represent the greatest communication challenges, and take them into account in the communication effort.

## 3 Five guiding principles for government information

Information and communication are in many cases a prerequisite for the performance of government tasks. A professional approach to communication is crucial to success.

The five guiding principles for the government information effort are designed to focus both on how information should be used and managed, and how it should be organised. The principles are:

- the communication principle
- the principle of active information
- the coherency principle
- the principle of line management
- the principle of information as a management responsibility

### ● The communication principle

The communication principle is the ideal or guideline for government information activities. The public administration and the





public should be equal partners in the communication process and alternate in the role of senders and receivers and as initiators of the communication process. This entails that government needs to take account of both the senders' and receivers' need to communicate, that government needs to put itself in the receiver's situation and appreciate his or her problems, viewpoints and needs, and that each ministry and agency should install a permanent system for dialoguing with its central publics.

A public administration that communicates well knows its publics and acquaints itself with their needs, wishes and capacities. It also acknowledges that needs and wishes change over time. It has to keep this insight in mind when distributing burdens and goods and in developing service provision and other facilities. Knowledge of publics' needs and wishes must therefore underlie both the long-term design of services and information activities, and the day-to-day effort. The communication principle can also entail establishing physical or electronic forums for communication with citizens, businesses and organisations.

### ● **The principle of active information**

Insight into and access to the public administration is not enough. Active information from the government about the entitlements, obligations and opportunities of citizens, businesses and organisations is a necessary condition for the proper functioning of a state based on the rule of law and the welfare state. This information has to have priority, and government should ensure that the need for citizens to make a personal effort to gain information should be lowest for those groups of the population that have greatest difficulty in getting through to the public authorities.

Information and communication are one of several instruments by which the government can achieve its goals effectively and efficiently. If the public administration is to be able to use information as a means of performing tasks, the information effort must be actively planned with a basis in the various target groups' situation and needs.

Active information can also entail ministries and agencies collaborating with private organisations and interest groups in order to reach the population indirectly

### ● **Groups with special needs**

The principle of active information entails that the need for citizens to make a personal effort to gain information should be lowest for those groups of the population that have greatest difficulty in getting through to the public authorities. That is why ministries and agencies that disseminate information intended for the entire, or for large sections of, the population must ensure that this information is also available in a form, and is conveyed in a way, that ensures that it also reaches groups with special needs. Where rights, schemes and the like that apply specifically to such groups are concerned, the information must be planned with a basis in the target groups' ability to assimilate and communicate information. This could entail use of social networks, specially adapted new technology and active use of front-line personnel.

through them. Active information also entails raising service levels and facilitating contact through public service offices and the 24-hour government. All ministries and agencies are required to carry service declarations that show what the public can expect of the agency.

The media are an important channel for communication. The government must be open, active and professional in its relations with the media. The government needs to be ahead of the field in the sense that information about issues should as far as possible be disseminated before the media take an interest in them. Contact with the media should be planned to the maximum extent as a part of general planning in relation to issues of public interest. Systematic use should be made of the Internet, for example vis-à-vis the media, both to provide background information and a supplementary and correct presentation of current issues of wider magnitude. Active information is not necessarily synonymous with more information. But it requires information to be targeted and to cover actual information needs of the target groups in a way that is comprehensible to them. Moreover, information must be transmitted through channels that reach the individual target group. This makes the appropriate mix of channels a key issue in communication planning.

### ● **The multi-cultural society**

The greater the cultural mix of a population, the greater the demands on the information effort. Values, culture, mastery of Norwegian and reading ability influence how the government's message is perceived. Hence ministries and agencies need to inform and communicate with a basis in the cultural background of various target groups. The communication principle requires ministries and agencies to define target groups, ascertain each target group's basis and capacities before information is planned, and to check whether the information has in fact reached its destination. Social networks and non-governmental intermediaries may be useful information channels in the multi-cultural society.

### ● **The coherency principle**

When people are in need of information it usually matter little to them which ministry or agency it comes from. The coherency principle requires information given by one ministry or agency to be co-ordinated as far as possible, both internally and with information from adjacent agencies, so as to come across as a coherent whole seen from the recipient's vantage point. Unless the individual understands the totality in the information given, (s)he will find it difficult to take care of her/his own interests satisfactorily. Hence a basis must be taken in the recipient's need for information.

The public administration should be regarded as a totality featuring an interaction across administrative levels and sectors. This needs to be achieved both through



cross-cutting collaboration on information measures and through co-location in the form of information services or public service offices. The coherency perspective should also be promoted through Internet portals and common interfaces that enable the individual to search for information with a basis in his or her situation and needs. Citizens, businesses and organisations will then have an easier working day, while the government can save on resources and avoid wasteful duplication of effort.

### ● **The principle of line management**

The principle of line management means that responsibility for information follows responsibility for the issue in question. Responsibility falls not only to line managers but also to individual staff members. They must treat information and communication as part and parcel of the administrative procedure and as an instrument on a par with other instruments. Information and communication are one of several instruments that ministries and agencies need to employ to achieve their goals. Information has to be seen in the context of legal instruments and economic, physical and organisational instruments. Responsibility for information thus entails a responsibility to ascertain information needs of target groups, what communication challenges the ministry or agency faces in its various areas, and what can be achieved at any given time by information and communication.

Special rules apply in the event of major crises requiring extraordinary coordination.

### ● **The principle of information as a management responsibility**

Putting government information policy into practice in the public administration is a management responsibility. Each management is responsible for ensuring that information and communication are used in a professional and ethically sound manner. Hence the ministry or agency must possess the expertise needed to ensure good-quality information. The management is also responsible for securing an organisational set-up, budget and routines that ensure a professional information regime. A manager cannot delegate responsibility for information, only the authority to perform certain tasks. Contact with the media is a management responsibility, and the individual agency is expected to have routines in place to this end.

The principle of information as a management responsibility is a consequence of the line management principle: each agency and each department is responsible for information and communication in its particular field. This is necessary to ensure that the information given is correct, that it is given at the right time and to the right recipient.

Based on the principle of line management and the principle of information as a management responsibility, information and communication is an area where performance criteria need to be applied to senior government managers. The head of information at ministries and agencies should act as adviser to the senior management.



The guiding principles must be viewed in context

The five guiding principles need to be seen collectively. Rigid interpretation of one principle may lead to collision with one or more of the others. Information policy will not function if the principles are applied independently of each other. In order to fulfil the intentions of information policy it is, for example, imperative to balance the line principle against the coherency principle. Unless each sector and agency keeps the recipient's situation in mind, the line management principle may at worst entail more and poorer information to the recipient. The line management principle cannot function unless the principle of information as a management responsibility is accepted. The communication principle likewise depends on the principle of active information being practised through definition of target groups and identification of their needs.



## Consequences

The goals and principles of information policy set premises for how the individual ministry and agency should approach the communication effort. The following account shows the practical consequences of the information policy for ministries, directorates and other government agencies.

### 4 Information set-up at the individual ministry and agency

#### Basis, control and planning

All information and communication at the individual ministry or agency must be based in the objectives and performance requirements set for the agency. The ministry or agency itself defines what the goals and principles underlying the government information policy entail for the institution. The overall communication strategy or policy should then be drawn up on this basis. Information on the entitlements, obligations and schemes administered by the agency must be given priority. In the case of larger information programmes, separate plans should be drawn up based on prior analyses.

#### Participation, consultation and evaluation

The public administration makes a major contribution to fulfilling the communication principle by carrying out regular surveys, by culling information from its users via administrative procedures and by maintaining a permanent system for dialoguing with central publics through physical or virtual forums. Such forums could, for example, be consultation and laymen's conferences or home pages enabling exchange of information.

The ministry or agency's communication strategy must be based on its knowledge of various publics that will be affected. Communication programmes must be carried out in such a way that the target groups are able to understand



and utilise the information as well as possible. Steps must also be taken to check whether the information has actually reached its destination and is understood. In that way the government can ensure that information is neither controlled by the sender nor that it is exclusively on the administration's premises.

### Information as a policy instrument

A sector, ministry, agency or department is obliged to use all available means to achieve the goals set. Only in special cases are information and communication alone enough to perform social tasks. But in combination with legal, economic, physical and organisational instruments, information and communication are as a rule indispensable, for one thing because they are the medium through which information is given about the existence and the content of the other instruments. That is why government agencies need fixed routines for assessing how information and communication should be used in relation to other instruments at an early stage in all planning processes.

### Information as part of administrative procedure – responsibility

When major issues are dealt with, it rests with the line organisation to assess how information and communication should be used and managed. The ministry or agency should have a system to ensure that no administrative procedure is completed in its respective departments without consideration being given to how information about the issue in question should be disseminated.

When an issue is being dealt with, stages in the administrative procedure at which it is natural to inform and communicate with the person(s) involved should be specified. At each such stage, the merits of communicating wholly or partly by electronic means should be considered.

### Internal communication



Good internal communication and information is a prerequisite for good external communication and information. The connection between internal and external information must be understood and taken into account when organising and planning government measures.

The ministry or agency must define who has to know what internally, and what tools and services staff must have access to for external communication to function smoothly. Good external communication also requires the agency's goals and strategies to be familiar to staff and to be complied with by them. The staff are a channel for bringing publics' views up to a level in the agency at which decisions can be made on the basis of them. The Intranet is a useful aid to internal communication, but not sufficient in itself. Managers' own direct communication with their staff remains very important.

Information and communication across administrative levels and sectors is a basic premise for, and a central instrument in, ensuring that the public administration comes across as coherent and coordinated.

Reorganisation processes within and across government agencies are becoming more and more common. Informing and communicating with those who are affected is a precondition for the success of such processes.



## Information services on the web

A government goal is to get citizens, businesses and organisations to use the Internet. The Internet enables efficient and inexpensive storage, updating, distribution and collating of information and is accessible to publics regardless of time and place. Like other information provision, Internet-based information services must be derived from the agency's goals and tasks and designed in accordance with the goals and principles of the information policy. The technical choices that are made must therefore promote communication with target groups.

Making public services available 24 hours a day is an important policy move for the Government. It includes electronic services that enable users to communicate with the public administration via the Internet not just to download information, but also to carry out transactions with the administration. Up to now the Internet has essentially been used to distribute information. In time more services will be provided via the Internet. There are already many good instances where the government posts forms on the Internet, thus facilitating communication. The Internet enables tighter linkage between information and service provision than do the traditional channels.

A feature of good management of information resources is that just a single channel is used for updating information. This enables information to be presented in a coherent manner across sectors and levels of the administration. New technology also provides new opportunities for adapting information specifically to the needs of the handicapped.

What channels should be employed in the information effort depends nonetheless on the target groups to be reached and on what information is to be transmitted. In many cases the best result is achieved via a combination of several channels.



## Information management expertise

Government agencies must have the requisite information management skills if they are to implement an information policy successfully. Management must ensure that the ministry or agency has set concrete requirements for information skills on the part of managers, the information unit and its executive officers. The management must also ensure that these requirements are met through recruitment and training. For managers the minimum required information skills should be a knowledge of:

- the information policy and its requirements
- potentials and limitations of information management as a policy instrument
- performance indicators for good information and communication
- the link between strategic planning and strategic communication planning
- media relations
- organisation of communication activities and the resources needed
- information and communication requirements imposed by 24-hour government and public service offices

## Information systems and routines

In order to comply with the information policy, the individual ministry and the individual agency must develop systems and routines for managing and ensuring the quality of information. This can be done by concretising and operationalising various aspects of the policy. Based on the guides referred to at the back of this

## **Crisis communication**

Information and communication during crises makes particular demands on precision and organisation. Once a crisis has set in it is too late to start planning. The individual ministries and agencies must think through potential scenarios and draw up preparedness plans for information. In the case of major crises the Government's crisis information unit (Kriseinfo) can assist the ministries.

booklet, it is up to the individual ministry and agency to decide how operationalisation should be carried out.

## **Organisation**

The coherency principle, the line management principle and the principle of information as a management responsibility form the framework for the organisation of information activities.

Many agencies need a centrally placed information manager or adviser to contribute analysis and specialist advice and to set premises on a par with the personnel, budget and economics managers. The person in question acts as an adviser vis-à-vis both the management and the respective departments. His or her role is to assure the quality of information related to performance.

There is often a need for an information unit employing staff to take care of coordination and production tasks which, based on cost-effectiveness or other considerations, could suitably be assembled in one entity. This applies for example to policy documents, annual reports, in-house newspapers, the Intranet, Internet services and other agency-wide information. It also applies to media relations.

To be able to give advice about information in a strategic context and promote a good information flow, the information manager or adviser must be located in a position where access to strategic information is not filtered or delayed. He or she must participate in the agency's senior executive or managerial meeting and be a part of, or collaborate directly with, the agency's senior management.

## **Economics**

The principle of line management entails that the person responsible for achieving results in a particular area also controls the resources required, including information. This requires the agency to allocate resources for planned information tasks. It also means that budget responsibility for information is a line responsibility. The individual ministry, directorate and department accordingly has budget responsibility for information in its specific areas. A separate budget is needed for information tasks that encompass the entire agency.

## **Paying for information**

Government information about citizens' entitlements and obligations is in principle free of charge. The same is true of information that citizens need in order to utilise a service or scheme or to participate in the democratic process.

Information that explains a new venture, a law, a new programme or a service is also in principle free of charge. The same applies to information about health, safety and the environment, personal information requested by the individual whom it concerns, and information delivered under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

Where citizens have a choice between basic information in the above areas and information in a more worked up or finished form, ministries and agencies may charge for work done. They can also charge for information to businesses and organisations that then resell it to their customers.

## 5 The ministries and directorates

### The ministries

The ministries face several challenges when implementing the information policy. Good information flows and communication need to be secured internally, vis-à-vis other ministries and levels of administration and other publics such as the press, the public, organisations and businesses.

The ministries are in a special position since the information unit collaborates directly both with the political and administrative top management. How tasks are to be distributed within the information unit is up to the ministry in question to decide. However, it seems difficult in practice for the one and the same staff member to combine ongoing assistance to the minister with long-term planning for the ministry as a whole.

The ministries have a special responsibility for coordinating information across sectors. According to the line management principle the ministries have an independent responsibility for resolving information challenges within their respective areas. They are also responsible for ensuring that the information principles are complied with by subordinate agencies. The individual subordinate agency is in turn responsible for all aspects of the information effort within its administrative area - i.e. apart from ministerial policy assessments. Thus, the line principle requires ministries to set requirements for subordinate agencies based on the Government's information policy, and to check that these requirements are acted on.

A central task for the ministries is to draw up guidelines for managing information channelled through the official control systems available to them (allocation letters, management contracts, activity plans, etc.). The ministry is duly obliged, in its allocation letters, to require subordinate agencies to implement the information policy and information tasks.





Given their responsibility for entire sectors of society, the ministries have an especially important task in developing systems that ensure a flow of information from the front line through all levels up to the decision-making authority and vice versa.

Media relations is a major aspect of information and communication activity in all ministries. Guidelines, expertise and training that enable management to perform this task in a professional manner are all the more important for the ministries. Media relations must to the greatest possible degree be viewed in conjunction with the ministry's other information and communication effort.

### The directorates and other central government administration

The directorates and other central government agencies play an increasingly important role in government information and communication now that more tasks and exercise of government authority are being delegated to the directorates and other subordinate agencies. As a rule these agencies are directly responsible for front-line services and thus play a key role in the communication context. More than other public agencies, the directorates must be professional, both strategically and operationally, in their information on entitlements and obligations.

The role of listening post to capture changing behavioural patterns, as herald of users' needs and as reporter of the effectiveness and efficiency of established public service regimes, is a central one for the directorates. They should have fixed routines for culling information from their various publics and should use this information to assess such regimes.

For the individual agency the line management principle means that its respective departments are responsible for information activities in their particular areas - apart from information about managerial assessments, agency policy and external coordination. Each agency's information unit provides specialist guidance both to the senior management as regards information about agency tasks and to the respective departments. Hence information should to be planned as an integral aspect of task performance. The same applies to requirements as to communication management skills and resource needs.

Where competitive outsourcing is concerned, it is important to set for requirements for information and communication in the same way as requirements are set for other competitively outsourced operations.

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## **6 Ministry of Labour and Government Administration and Statskonsult**

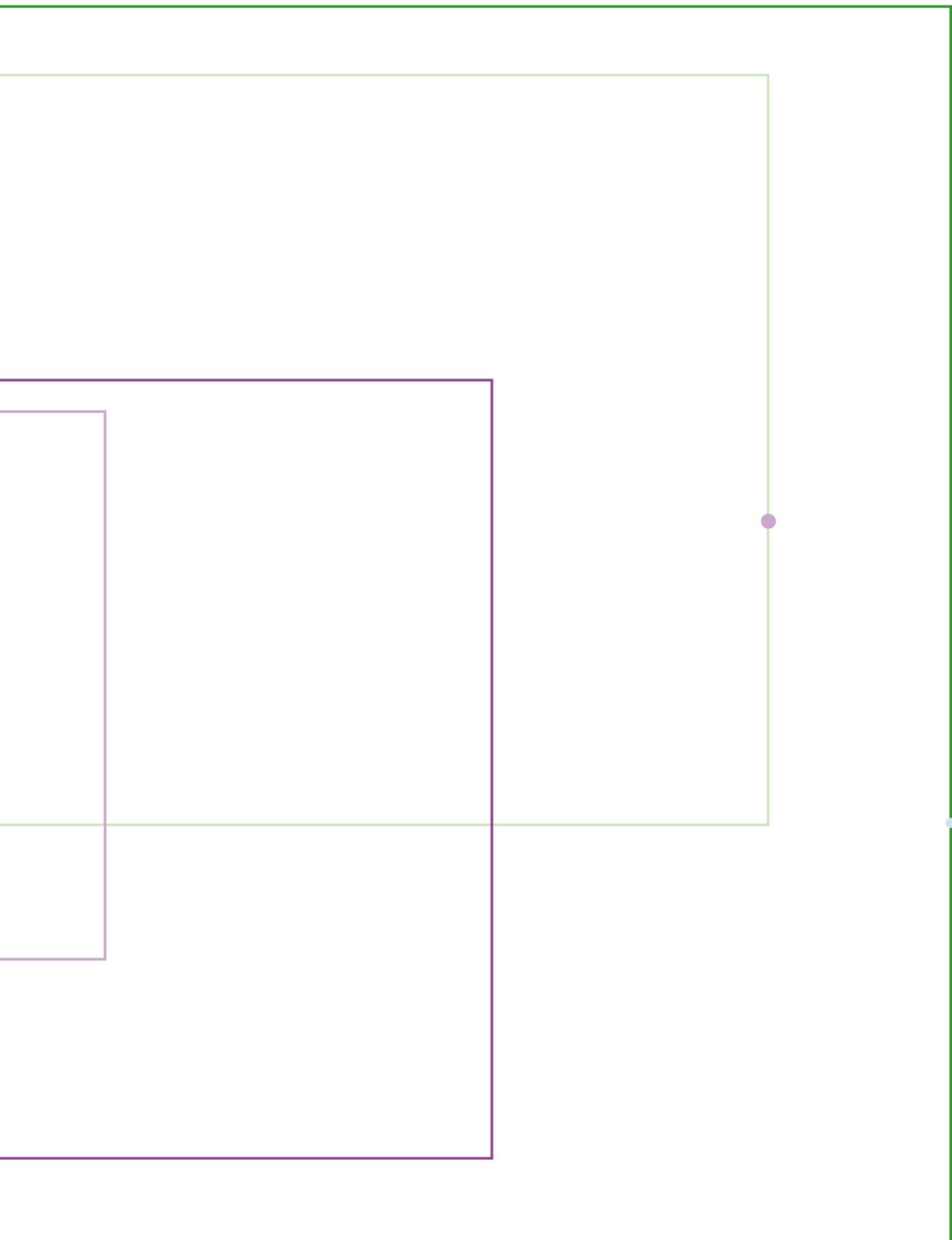
### **Ministry of Labour and Government Administration**

The Ministry of Labour and Government Administration is the ministry specifically responsible for the information policy. It has constitutional and sectoral responsibility for Statskonsult.

### **Statskonsult**

Statskonsult (the Directorate for Communication and Public Management) is the central government's specialist agency in information and communication matters and is subordinate to the Ministry of Labour and Government Administration. An important task for the directorate is to seek to ensure that central government agencies base their information and communication activities on the government information policy. The directorate is also active in bringing a 24-hour public administration and public service offices into being. A further important task is to monitor trends in information provision in the ministries and other central government agencies and to report its findings to the Ministry of Labour and Government Administration.





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