

Regulations concerning mandatory ICT standards – Notification to ESA

Background

The Ministry of Government Administration and Reform (FAD) will lay down regulations, pursuant to Section 15a (d) of the Public Administration Act of 10 February 1967, requiring the use of mandatory ICT standards in the public sector. The background for the draft regulations is the Government's wish that common, mandatory IT standards should be used at all administrative levels. The Ministry's objective is that these regulations will enter into force on 1 January 2010.

It is the Ministry of Government Administration and Reform that coordinates the Government's IT policy. The practical responsibility for regulations under Section 15 a of the Public Administration Act has therefore been assigned to the Ministry of Government Administration and Reform, even though the Public Administration Act falls under the Ministry of Justice.

Purpose

The purpose of the draft regulations is the wish to achieve good electronic interaction within the public sector and with the public. We seek to achieve this by ensuring that the various IT systems being used in the public sector will be able to interact by means of open mandatory standards.

FAD's work on preparing guidelines for the use of open IT standards in the public sector will result in recommendations, but also in requirements, and FAD will propose that such requirements should be mandatory for all administrative agencies. These requirements are listed in a Reference Catalogue for the State sector. Thus, the Ministry will lay down the mandatory requirements in the form of regulations, so that they will be made applicable not only to the central authorities, but also to the regional and local authorities. The draft regulations only lay down the mandatory requirements, while the Reference Catalogue presents both recommended and mandatory requirements.

The mandatory requirements made here are not comprised by any obligations the local authorities already have today, but they are in line with the general objectives put forward in eMunicipality 2012 concerning the use of open standards.

Procedures

Work on the Reference Catalogue and on the regulations is a continuing and long-term process, and both will regularly be made the subject of amendments and extensions.

The present draft regulations comprise a requirement that certain document formats must be used in connection with publications on public internet pages. The supply of approved international standards is increasing. As new standards are approved, it may be necessary to reconsider what standards should be used in different connections.

The Ministry's goal is that the regulations on the use of IT standards in the public administration should be regularly revised, primarily by the addition of new instructions on the use of specific standards for certain purposes. The Ministry assumes that whenever any amendment is proposed, a consequence analysis will be carried out and that the question of cost recovery and any financial compensation will be examined.

Impacts

The financial impacts will here concern the public sector only. These impacts are limited, and estimates show a cost of approximately 9 mill. NOK in total over a period of 5 years. These figures cover the whole administrative part of the Norwegian public sector.