



Local government optimizes tight budgets to elevate service delivery with digital workflows on ServiceNow



Annual savings generated through creation of inhouse developer team



30-50% expected decrease in resource demands over next five years



Reduction in general IT costs

Industry: Local government
Location: Copenhagen, Denmark
Size: 45,000 employees

Doing more with less

Across the world, there are very few examples of public service organizations being lavished with extra cash. The reality for most of them is that they have smaller budgets, greater workloads, and higher service expectations. They live by the mantra “do more with less.”

Copenhagen understands this reality. In response, the Danish capital is promoting the advantages of automation throughout its local government. The project is delivering startling results.

Automation to ensure continued service excellence

Copenhagen consistently scores high in the annual ranking of “Europe’s most liveable cities.” It has enviable infrastructure, education, culture, and supports a healthy lifestyle for its citizens. If you’re a cyclist, you’ll love it.

It is also managed by a city government forced to take on 10% cuts in annual operating budgets. If Copenhagen wants to continue to thrive, it must find new ways of working.

The response from the City of Copenhagen is transparency and automation. The city is not shying away from its budget pressures. It wants to collaborate with its 45,000-member workforce to help find solutions.

“The budget might shrink, but the task doesn’t go away,” says Susanne Hansen, Manager, Automation and Development at the City of Copenhagen. “We believe automation shouldn’t be feared. It can help develop our people.”

Challenge

Accelerate the adoption of automation to drive critical cost savings and service improvements

Products

- ServiceNow® HR Service Delivery

Solution

Using ServiceNow HR Service Delivery, the city has succeeded in creating a reliable and flexible platform that supports ongoing business efficiency.



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Susanne Hansen, Manager, Automation and Development, City of Copenhagen

Creating a coherent digital workflow and winning advocates

Susanne leads a team charged with finding automation opportunities across the organization. She uses ServiceNow to identify processes ripe for automation, eliminate manual tasks where possible, and lay the groundwork for new technologies, such as AI and machine learning.

The challenge is as much cultural as technical. For automation to succeed, the city must create seamless digital workflows that integrate with their backend systems. Copenhagen must comply with strict service- and IT-management standards. Susanne and her team must be able to quickly design and make changes to processes and workflows in the platform itself, with minimal support from third-party developers or consultants.

To win over employees, automation had to be presented as simple and align with the requirements of business stakeholders. The interface needed to be stable and friendly to users.

“We wanted a flexible platform that could integrate many types of legacy systems and allow us to make ongoing small changes,” says Susanne. “We wanted to avoid friction.” This is why the city chose the Now Platform® to get the work done.

Demonstrating progress and creating momentum

Using ServiceNow HR Service Delivery, the city has succeeded in creating a platform that supports ongoing business efficiency. It has proved reliable and flexible. The platform has been embraced by a broad spectrum of users, including managers, trade organizations, and blue-collar workers—many of whom are not regular IT users. It has helped the legal department manage GDPR compliance and the finance team streamline credit card payments.

The Now Platform is considered a core system within the organization. It covers most administrative areas in the shared service center of the city and handles more than 1 million cases each year.

The impact has been huge. IT operational costs are down 30%, saving over €500,000 per year. The city expects an additional 30–50% reduction in resource demands over the next five years. The city has saved €1 million through increased productivity and efficiency in case resolution with the system. The project, which cost €4 million, is expected to have repaid itself within four years.

Susanne says the true impact is the way the Now Platform has been embraced by users, “We’re able to make regular small changes or improvements. It is really easy to develop. We’re deploying new features in production every two weeks. That kind of ongoing development creates momentum, demonstrates progress, and wins converts. We can prove we’re moving the business forward.”

Taking a hands-on approach to development

Susanne’s department is now working with the organization to find new automation projects. The more users see that automation can help them, the faster the word spreads and the more opportunities are revealed.

“We can’t be an expert on every process,” says Susanne. “We rely on the business accepting what we’re doing and approaching us. We tend to find success where there are complaints or stress around existing processes.”



The city is also developing a tool to help spot process glitches. "We plan to mine system logs to see if there are any patterns we can address," explains Susanne.

Having an inhouse team of developers has made a huge impact. The team is expected to generate savings of €100,000 a year, reducing the need to hire third parties for every change they want to make in the system, but it also signals the city's commitment to taking a hands-on approach to automation.

"We're looking at onboarding and mobile as the next big opportunities. They're both areas that can make a huge statement as to the type of organization we want to be," says Susanne. "Working with ServiceNow, we have access to a community where we can share ideas and learn from others."

