

SWOT analysis, Vital Rural Area, Vejen Kommune, Denmark

Introduction:

A SWOT analysis is a general tool which can be used when you want to make a summary of the situation and the potentials in your local region.

The SWOT analysis example presented at the second page of this document was finished in Vejen Kommune, Denmark, back in 2009. It refers to one of the work packages in the Vital Rural Area project application concerning 'Wellbeing and Services'.

The first task in this work package was: *'to fine-tune the needs and preferences of the local population with regard to services and facilities in the field of well-being and health care', by*

- *a desktop research analysis (SWOT)*
- *identification of specific target groups and their specific needs*

We made a report based on statistics and local data, and then we finally made the SWOT analysis as a summary and a conclusion to our findings.

The SWOT analysis became a very important basis for our decisions on which concrete pilot activities we wanted to do afterwards as part of the Vital Rural Area project.

- Look at the SWOT analysis below just as an example which hopefully can inspire you. Transfer it to your own local situation by filling in your data and conclusions. Feel free to contact me if you have further questions.

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SWOT Analysis model:

Strengths	Weakneses
Opportunities	Threats

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Strengths

- Good infrastructure for transport and commuting
- Short distance to larger cities in all directions
- Relatively low rate of unemployment
- Population is expected to increase with 7,5% until 2022
- Settling in Vejen Kommune is less expensive than in e.g. Kolding
- A lot of different possibilities for settling somewhere in the area
- Fiber networks (FTTH) offered to everybody and everywhere before end of 2012
- 'Grassroots' in 21 rural communities are well organized by themselves
- Relatively many children in the age 0-18 live in the rural communities
- Strong tradition for local community building and self organizing
- Room for farming, and for woods and nature as well

Opportunities

- New digital services can be provided and developed
- More settling is possible because of good opportunities in general
- Infrastructure and fast broadband stimulate settling and innovation
- Working on distance from home is possible
- New jobs and new business ideas can be realized almost everywhere because of strong infrastructure
- Virtual contact to knowledge and research institutions is possible
- More knowledge transfer to the area can be established
- A lot of people have already been trained in using ICT technologies
- Lifelong learning can be stimulated and better organized
- Tourism can be developed, - keywords: nature, culture, open space...
- ICT can be used for different purposes by tourists
- More (public) services can be digitalized for self-service solutions
- More ICT and e.g. robots can be introduced in eldercare
- Video conferences can be used for time saving and reduced CO2 pollution

Weaknesses

- Low level of income
- Low revenue from taxes to the municipality
- Low level of education
- Less citizens with higher educations
- No institutions with higher educations
- Hospitals are missing in the area
- Few companies with high level 'knowledge based' production
- No research- or 'knowledge spreading' institutions close to Vejen
- Lack of jobs means that commuting is necessary for a number of citizens

Threats

- More elderly people with longer lifetime demand more public services
- Recruiting of employees is generally difficult for the public sector
- Public services will lack because of missing tax revenue/bad economy in the municipality
- Services and institutions disappear from the rural societies
- Young people do not come back when education is finished
- Results from research e.g. at universities is not spread very well to our region
- Local companies and the public sector are less innovative than in urban areas
- Less economic growth in Vejen Kommune than in other more urban areas

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