

News
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Sdipotech lists:

Trends – and challenges for the infrastructure sector 2020

Digitalisation, electrification and flight shame that led to train hype. These were some of the leading trends within infrastructure that characterised the past year. But what will be the most important to keep an eye on during 2020?

The infrastructure sector is neglected both in Sweden and in large parts of Europe and pressure is increasing to make investments for a functioning and healthy society. A lot of the existing infrastructure is antiquated, and in addition there is currently a lack of capacity, particularly in expanding and complex urban areas. Meanwhile, requirements for more sustainable, efficient and safe solutions are increasing, which in turn is driving technological developments. Jakob Holm, CEO of the technology group Sdipotech, lists some of the most important aspects that will dominate the new year, as well as some of Sdipotech's subsidiaries that offer solutions to critical needs within the infrastructure sector.

Road safety

Road safety is integrated in several of the UN's seventeen goals for a shift towards a more sustainable society. Reducing the maximum speed in cities to 30 kilometres per hour is increasingly being talked about – something that also increases social sustainability through improved mobility for cyclists and pedestrians. The market for transport and road safety is driven by society's pursuit of sustainable, efficient and safe environments. RedSpeed is a leading player in the UK that develops solutions for road safety and digital cameras for speed and traffic monitoring.

Energy optimisation

Sweden has a major waste of heating. The fact is that between 30 and 40 percent of the energy that is required to heat up our properties leaks.¹ Meanwhile, we lack capacity in the electricity grid and several regions face problems with increased supply. KSS Klimat & Styrsystem helps property owners to optimise energy and capacity use based on a building's system and operations. In this way, both the energy cost and the environmental impact can be reduced.

Electricity quality is also an important aspect when it comes to energy. Electricity quality problems can arise, among other ways, in connection with weak networks and varying production, such as renewable electricity. Until recently, Sweden had eight nuclear reactors that accounted for about 40 percent of the country's electricity production.² However, in late 2019, Ringhals' reactor 2 was decommissioned, and in 2020 reactor 1 will also be closed down. In connection to this and in the wake of the prevailing climate debate, the number of renewable energy solutions is increasing. This is a positive development, but it also creates new challenges as it affects electricity quality. We can thus expect higher demand for automated systems for continual monitoring of electricity supplies – something that the Swedish company Unipower offers. Eurotech is another of Sdipotech's subsidiaries, which is specialised in secure power supply and protects against power outages and interruptions in the electricity grid.

Water infrastructure

The groundwater should provide a safe and sustainable drinking water supply, but also contribute to a good living environment for plants and animals in lakes and watercourses. The quality of groundwater in Sweden varies a lot, depending on both the natural conditions and the human impact. The biggest problem with groundwater quality is faced by areas with large populations or a lot of agriculture. Therefore it is extremely important to take care of the water that is used in buildings and industries which eventually ends up in nature. Water Treatment Products is specialised in water-related problems, where products and solutions for water treatment are a central part of the offer. The company also supplies products that ensure efficient processes for waterborne cooling and heating, which reduce the energy need. Topas Vatten is another company that is focused on treatment of wastewater for properties outside the municipal water and sewage networks and thus ensures cleaner groundwater and reduces eutrophication in lakes and seas.

¹ International Energy Agency

² Vattenfall [Produktion och drift](#)

Meanwhile, a report from the consulting company WSP shows that the water and sewage system is the infrastructure that the public considers to be the most important for a functioning society. The maintenance of piping systems in both Sweden and in many other countries in Europe is neglected and faces significant renovation needs. The fact is that a quarter of the pure drinking water, which is produced in our water treatment plants leaks due to leaking pipes and conduits.³ Auger is a British company that is specialised in handling claims relating to underground infrastructure, such as damage to pipes, drainage systems and sewers.

Digitalisation

If digitalisation was an important trend last year it will be at least as dominant during 2020. This year, 5G is being launched. In the longer term, the new mobile network will enable smart roads, properties and industries that can collect information in real-time – which in turn can improve efficiency in society in several ways. But in the same time, this will impose large demands on capacity, uninterruptible power supply and network security. As an increased volume of data will be available, overall and constantly, the risk is also increasing for unauthorised dissemination. Data protection will therefore become ever more important and the privacy issue will move up the agenda again. This means more focus on IT security and software products for secure communication, for both commercial companies and public authorities. A Swedish company that offers solutions for this is Cryptify.

To sum up: in order to be able to create and maintain sustainable, efficient and safe solutions, the development is imposing major demands in relation to social planning. But the investments in infrastructure, and in the companies, which are critical for a functioning society, also need to increase at the same rate.

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About Sdiptech AB:

Sdiptech AB Sdiptech AB is a technology group with a primary focus on infrastructure segments critical to well-functioning societies and to welfare, e.g. water & sanitation, power & energy, transportation, energy efficiency and air climate. As part of our offering in urban areas, we also provide niched technical services for buildings and real-estate such as renovation of elevators and roofs. The company has approximately SEK 1,750 million in sales and is based in Stockholm.

³ WSP's report [VA-SKULDEN – SANNING ELLER MYT](#)