

Applications as an Engine for Effective Building of SDI

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SUMMARY

EUROGI is the umbrella organisation that represents the European Geographic Information (GI) community, being an independent, non-governmental, and non-profit organisation. Since EUROGI is convinced that good governance, economic and social development, and informed public participation depend upon the availability and widespread use of reliable and spatially-referenced information, its mission is therefore to maximise the availability and effective use of GI throughout Europe. To achieve this EUROGI is representative of the whole information industry – of those who create it, of developers and those who add value, and of the whole range of those who use GI, including not only the National GI Associations (NGIA), but also entities from Industry, Academic institutions, Public Sector bodies, Not-for-Profit organisations, and interested Individuals. Currently in several regions and countries all over Europe, the value of GI and the benefit that can be created by using it for different fields of application is identified. Establishing interoperable and harmonised Spatial Data Infrastructures (SDIs) in the regions and across Europe is a political objective. The development of SDIs creates its benefit not only by a standardised access to datasets itself, but mainly by giving the chance to use and evaluate these data in different applications. The development of applications based on or at least partly using GI has increased during the last year. A major impulse came from the development of navigation systems that, by using not only maps combined with speech to present geoinformation, become more and more familiar today. EUROGI supports the idea to develop SDIs and sees the need of taking into account the requirements from the different application areas since the very beginning of the establishment of these SDIs. Therefore EUROGI, together with partners from the GINIE consortium and its member CAGI, created the WebCastle as a public available website to raise the awareness for spatial information, its use and its value for different areas of application. The WebCastle, in its current version, contains a collection of case studies and best practice examples for the use GI. For its further development it is planned to provide a tool that enables organisations and initiatives to present and share their examples of innovative and up-to-date use of GI with others. In addition to the objective of awareness creation, it is foreseen to establish the platform to collect and handle the requirements coming from the fields of application. The presentation will

show the potential of interoperable and harmonised SDIs for different fields of application, and the different needs resulting from the diversity of these areas. The WebCastle will be introduced as a tool for organisations to explain the value of geoinformation and SDIs, and as an offer to collect and share needs and experiences resulting from the introduction of spatial data into new fields of applications. EUROGI recently established a Working and Advisory Group (WAG) on International Affairs, aiming both to monitor trends affecting the GI community worldwide and to influence the shape of development policies in foreign countries where aid or cooperation programs are in place. The establishment of application driven SDIs in developing countries and its contribution within the framework of GSDI is also addressed

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