

Discussion and Dissemination Forums

Although SDI/GI was not explicitly mentioned in either the EU Digital Agenda or in the relevant Hungarian strategic document, it is obvious that GI and related services are essential to most activities in economics, policy planning, implementation and control. Unprecedented acceleration in technological development would make it seem logical for NGOs at regional and national level to keep decision-makers better informed both by dissemination of information about new capabilities and discussions relating to associated legal, policy and organisational aspects.

Spatial Planning

Take the domain of spatial planning, one of the most influential and complex activities and one with a real need for quality and usable spatial data, information and services. Recent dissemination concerns early achievements of the ongoing EU project Plan4all, a collaboration of 24 European players led by the University of West Bohemia in Pilsen. The aim is to harmonise spatial-planning data according to INSPIRE, taking into account existing best practices. The dissemination framework is orchestrated by EUROGI, many of whose members successfully applied to host a Plan4all Dissemination Workshop. Those countries not earlier involved in the project found this opportunity provided twofold benefits: to learn from lessons and to raise awareness of how implementation of the INSPIRE directive can boost economic development by more efficient spatial planning using harmonised spatial data and services, a goal equally important for both private and public sectors.

Policy Aspects

Besides technological issues, policy aspects of data access, data share, associated legislation as PSI and reuse, IPR, licensing and data protection will also be touched on. In order to demonstrate how SDI-supported advanced spatial planning can contribute to sustainable social, environmental and/or economic developments, cases are needed. The challenge is amplified in applications related to natural or ecological disaster, where response time is critical, and especially in a cross-border environment. Expected results from Plan4all include dissemination forums, a database of best practices, and analysis of spatial-data share. Formulation of a recommendation regarding SDI-related spatial planning is also expected. The availability of understandable and more transparent planning information throughout Europe is in everyone's interest.

Bridge Building

This is why the Hungarian GI Association, in close cooperation with EUROGI, is committed to building a bridge between local stakeholders and fragmented interest groups, bringing together the relevant public, academic, private and civil-sector representatives. Decision-makers, core and value-added service providers, and users such as local government were invited to a forum entitled 'Digital Spatial Planning - a reality or utopia?' Due to the importance of the subject, HUNAGI upgraded this Plan4all Workshop to 'conference' level, the first international event on GI to be held in Budapest during the Semester of the Hungarian Presidency of the European Council.