

PPP for SDI

A spatial data infrastructure (SDI) is a framework of technologies, data, policies, institutional arrangements and people that aims to increase availability, understanding and use of spatial data and services in the support of policy, business, research and society at large. Urbanisation, the process of creating communities where people can live, work and play, is concerned with the ordering and design of settlements. Urbanism unifies people and destinations to form dense, vibrant communities, decreasing dependency on non-environmentally-friendly transportation as primary mode. Analogously, SDI urbanisation is the process of creating a dense, vibrant interconnected flow of geo-information, decreasing dependency on proprietary software.

SDI is rapidly growing around the world at several levels, local, national, and trans-national. Communities sharing the same thematic interest often develop their own SDI. These activities encompass community-wide content, sharing platforms and geoportals used to find and access geospatial information and associated geographic services via the internet. Since nowadays everybody belongs to several communities, emergent SDIs have themselves to interact, and the organisation of such interaction may be compared to urbanisation of settlements, requiring infrastructure and codes of behaviour. Progression towards urbanisation of SDIs implies bringing together key players. Instead of reinventing the wheel in each and every SDI project, discussion and exchange of knowledge or best practice can help leverage synergies and speed the process of SDI implementation. This may immediately result in easier and quicker access to geographic information. TheeSDI-Net+thematic network (within European Union eContent+ programme) aims at establishing a platform for communication and exchange between various stakeholders involved in the creation and use of SDIs. The project is a step towards understanding the challenges of SDI urbanisation.

Due to their nature, size, cost, and number of actors, SDIs are usually government related. But scarce government resources endanger long-term sustainability. Private resources may be made available through Public-Private Partnership (PPP) in contractual agreement between a public agency (national, regional or local) and a private-sector entity. PPP allows the skills and assets of each sector (public and private) to be shared with a view to delivering a service, product or facility for the benefit of the general public. In addition to the sharing of resources, each party shares in the risks and rewards associated with the joint project. PPPs represent new opportunities to provide both spatial data and services (viewing, delivering, manipulating and analysing spatial data) for SDIs at national, regional and local level, and in so doing may assist in the cost-effective rollout of INSPIRE. PPP for SDI is thus a main organisational challenge.

As an inclusive organisation, EUROGI contributes to understanding the non-technical mechanisms that underpin SDI developments, including their urbanisation and private-sector involvement.

<https://www.gim-international.com/content/article/ppp-for-sdi>
