

SECOND INTERGEO-EAST, ZAGREB

Strengthening the Regional Dimension

The second annual Intergeo-East for professionals from south-eastern Europe, especially the former countries of Yugoslavia, took place at Zagrebac'ski velesajam (Zagreb Fair), Croatia from 7th to 9th March 2005. Zagreb was chosen as venue due to its function as a junction for the region. About 3,500 exhibition visitors attended, eight hundred participating in the conference.

Intergeo-East exploits the model of the successful Intergeo in Germany, promoting exchanges both with Germany and between neighbouring countries in the region. In support of this goal, organisers from Germany worked together with local organisers of the event.

Cadastre Advances

After its official opening, the conference proper began with presentations on cadastre and land management in Croatia. On 1st March 2000 the Croatian Law on State Survey and Real Estate Cadastre was issued and today implementation of the Croatian cadastre and real estate register is quite far advanced. Institutions are working together to harmonise cadastre maps, which are the responsibility of the State Geodetic Authority, and the real-estate register of the Ministry of Justice. Financing by GTZ (Gesellschaft für Zusammenarbeit: German Association for Technical Co-operation) and the World Bank has largely contributed to the advanced situation. Nevertheless, digitisation and harmonisation programmes will not be completed before 2010. On a more general level, Croatia is promoting its national spatial data infrastructure by developing an implementation plan, supported by German organisations.

Efficient Exhibition

The Croatian Minister of Justice Mrs Vesna Štark-Ozbolt officially opened the exhibition on Tuesday morning. Her presence demonstrated the interest and commitment of this ministry to land registry and land reform. Entering the exhibition hall gave an impression of the venue being rather small. However, it was actually about 1,000m² greater than the previous venue in Belgrade and better distribution of stands gave visitors a good overview and access to individual exhibitors. Of seventy, nearly half the exhibitors came from Croatia, 20% from Germany and three or four from Austria. Exhibitors were also present from Russia, Canada, China, France, Norway and The Netherlands, and from several countries in the region. One exhibitor re-presented Croatia's neighbour, Bosnia-Herzegovina. A variety of local companies, 27 in total, sponsored the event. The aim in attending was for most exhibitors maintaining contact with their clients and keeping informed on what was happening in the region; few expected new clients.

Products and Services

The exhibition reflected on a smaller scale the product and service spectrum of Germany's Intergeo. Riegl Laser Management Systems demonstrated its mobile scanning platform mounted to a height of three meters. Videos showed how the system was used to measure pyramids in Egypt. Leica, Topcon, Sokia, Thales and Trimble offered a view of their latest surveying instruments. Leica demonstrated its total station with integrated latest communication technology. The presence of the Chinese manufacturer South Surveying & Mapping Ltd introduced the threat of competition to traditional instrument providers because the prices of Chinese products are of real interest to the local Southeast European market, where low prices are an important purchase incentive. In the area of aerial photo-graphy competition is also vivid; services were on offer by the Croatian Geofoto (Croatia) and Terra digital (Germany). The Italian Helica offering hyperspectral photographs taken from helicopters was one company looking for local clients. The Croatian State Geodetic Authority, together with the Ministry of Justice and the Croatian Geodetic Institute informed the public about their activities and the status of cadastre in the country. PROGIS, an Austrian company with strong competence in agriculture and forest management, presented a solution for agriculture complying with existing and future EU regulations; integrating GIS, experts systems and document hand-ling, it could be used by service providers for document handling, accounting, precision farming and planning. GISquadrat, also from Austria, is working on advanced and standardised interoperability solutions; its local subsidiary galaGIS demonstrated a prototype of a web mapping server based on OGC specifications and Intergraph solutions. This company's competence in web mapping was already introduced with the web-based Cadastre GIS, the first of its kind in Croatia, according to the brochure.

Event Appraisal

Intergeo-East started one year ago in Belgrade, so what are the basic findings to date? Despite the international objective, half its participants coming from Croatia gave the event a more national feel. Companies from neighbouring countries were missing and Croatian land administration dominated the conference. The German organisers recognised this; Mr Olaf Freier, representative of Hinte GmbH, admitted that the emphasis on the Croatian cadastre was stronger than had been expected. One difficulty is the different levels of development of the countries implicated in this event; there is also no clear picture of actual demand, despite the high number of visitors. Mr Freier stressed how this was inevitable for any event during its growth stage. Good communication over coming years would build an interregional network. In the meantime, it was important to continue the event annually, using Intergeo Germany as model. When in a few years demand had become clear, a more detailed strategy and positioning could be defined. The ultimate key to success was strengthening of the regional dimension. The next Intergeo-East will take place in Belgrade from 13th to 15th March 2006.

