

Tenth Elblag Conference

Many cities in Poland have advanced projects in computerisation of public administration. Elblag leads the way as the only one with maps now in digital format and stored in a spatial-information system. It is thus the perfect venue for an annual conference devoted to "changing the face of geodesy in Poland"™.

The tenth conference took place from 17th to 18th April 2008 under the title, 'The Role of Geodesy in an Information Society'. It was organised by the Mayor of Elblag, the Association of Polish Geodesists (SGP) and Opegieka, a leading Polish GIS company based in Elblag and headed by the author.

International Keynotes

A number of international speakers addressed the nearly 350 participants. Vanessa Lawrence, head of the UK Ordnance Survey (OS) gave a highly appreciated address. She told the meeting that OS, established over two centuries ago, had digitally stored 460 million objects with unique identifiers, and makes 5,000 updates daily. Annual sales of OS products reached 115 million pounds sterling.

Other international figures delivered important keynote addresses. These included Gennady Pobedinsky, deputy surveyor-general of Russia, Stig Jonsson, surveyor-general of Sweden, Volodymyr Tkach, chairman of the State Geodesic, Cartographic and Cadastral Service of Ukraine, Bas Kok, recently appointed president of the GSDI Association in the Netherlands, Knut Flathen, chief advisor to the Minister for Environment in Norway, Imrich Hornansky, National Mapping and Cadastral Authority, Slovak Republic, Dr Saulius Urbanas, head of National Land Service, Lithuania, and Dr Julio Mezcuá-Rodríguez of the National Geographic Institute, Spain.

Polish GI Policy

Prof. Jerzy Gazdzicki, president of the Polish Society for Spatial Information and chairman of the Implementation Board for INSPIRE, reviewed advancements in the transfer of the directive into Polish law; the deadline of May 2009 would be met, but any failure would entail serious consequences for Poland. Jolanta Orlinska, recently appointed surveyor-general of Poland and patron of the conference, discussed geoinformation policy in the country. During a forum discussion, participants considered the need to reorganise the State Geodesic Service and the functioning of geodesic and cartographic documentation centres; more human and financial resources were required. New legislation also came under scrutiny.

Roles and Standards

Deputy president of the Geodesy and Cartography Authority, Dr Adam Iwaniak, discussed the role of spatial-data infrastructure and the work involved in its implementation, including preparation of proper standards. Jarosław Bosy presented advancements in construction of the Active Geodesic Network ASG EUPOS. Jerzy Zielinski, director of the Geodesy, Cartography and GIS Department, presented the concept of a Georeferential Database for Topographical Objects and its role in business and administration. Marcin Lebiecki talked about emergency management for state geodesic and cartographic resources.

Next Year in Elblag

The first Elblag conference dates back to 1998; Elblag, today one of the few cities ready to join the European System of Spatial Information according to European directives, was chosen as venue because it was the first city in Poland running a Geodetic and Cartographic Digital Documentation Centre. Today, the conference is the biggest geodetic event in Poland. The eleventh conference will be held at the end of April 2009.