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swisstopo invites you to see Switzerland as never before.

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EuroGeographics

messenger

A new era for EuroGeographics

Welcome to the first edition of EuroGeographics *Messenger* which coincides with a very exciting and productive period for the Association and its 56 members, who are drawn from the national mapping, land registry and cadastral agencies of 44 European countries.

Not only have we celebrated our 10th anniversary, but we have also become an international not-for-profit organisation under Belgian law with a head office in Brussels. This is great news for the Association and those who work with us as it means we are well placed to quickly, efficiently and effectively provide objective, constructive support to the European Commission, Parliament and other European institutions based in Brussels. It marks a new era in our activities and secures a solid foundation for the future by building upon a decade of growth and organisational development, ensuring that, together, our members can continue to deliver tangible social, economic and environmental benefits and meet the demands of a rapidly changing market.

With so much going on, we want to keep those who share our passion for geospatial data up to date with all our news. The EuroGeographics Messenger will help you find about our current projects, guide you to sources of useful information and encourage you to join us in activities of mutual benefit. We very much hope that it will be a welcome addition to your inbox and would appreciate your feedback on its content. So that we can continue to improve this newsletter and include the information you want to see, please spare 5 minutes to complete our [short questionnaire](#) or [contact us](#) at any time.

In this issue, we focus on three of our members: The Department of Land Administration (FOMI) in Hungary, who provided crucial data and analysis to help control the 2010 Red Mud flood; swisstopo, part of a collaboration to publish an interactive Atlas of Switzerland; and Ordnance Survey which recently reached a milestone in INSPIRE compliance.

In addition to some dates for your diary, we also outline the findings of the recently completed European Spatial Data Infrastructure Network (ESDIN) project and report on our meeting at the Directorate-General for Research and Innovation.

If you'd like any more information about any of these topics, please visit our [website](#) or <mailto:contact@eurogeographics.org>.

Best wishes

Dave Lovell
OBE FRGS Cgeog
Secretary General and Executive Director



For an overview of our achievements in 2010, including examples of work by our members, our Annual Review is now available at [our web page](#).

ESDIN INSPIREs geospatial community by laying foundations for a European Location Framework



National geographical datasets can be harmonised to meet INSPIRE obligations whilst also addressing issues such as generalisation, quality evaluation, edge-matching and access control, the European Spatial Data Infrastructure Network (ESDIN) has concluded.

The collaboration between mapping and cadastral agencies, academic institutions and technology providers also delivered quality-led tools for data harmonisation, generalisation, edge-matching and access control to help prepare data for the INSPIRE Directive. The project was co-ordinated by EuroGeographics and supported by funding from the European Commission. It laid the foundations for a European Location Framework, which will enable cross-border information to be geographically-referenced and allow citizens, businesses and governments to gain maximum benefit from the reuse of existing national datasets.

Key results

- Proposals for a technical architecture for harmonising pan-European geospatial data and flexible licensing and access solutions for data and services
- Quality-led processes and tools for harmonisation and best practice to achieve INSPIRE compliance
- Best practice guidelines for data specifications, quality evaluation, generalisation, edge-matching, transformation, metadata, licensing, data management and access control
- Development of Security Assertion Markup Language (SAML)/Shibboleth prototypes for SDI access control enabling contributors to know who is attempting to use data access services. To take this work forward in a European Location Framework, attention needs to turn towards the political context and issues relating to legal and organisational interoperability.

Following the close of ESDIN, the project partners have agreed to maintain all services, which provide access to 50 datasets conforming to INSPIRE/European Location Framework, for specific test areas for a period of six months. All software created will become available under Berkeley Software Development (BSD) licence, making it open in the most permissive way.

Read the [full report](#). [Short summary](#) of the project is available. Find all the project deliverables at the [ESDIN project website](#).

Ordnance Survey reaches INSPIRE milestone

Ordnance Survey's metadata is now available for other public bodies and the public to access on their website and on data.gov.uk. In addition, customers of the OS OnDemand web map service will be able to view INSPIRE-related products as a raster image via an INSPIRE-compliant view service. The service, which delivers Ordnance Survey's most up-to-date mapping over the web to an organisation in seconds, has recently been upgraded to ensure compliance and to add raster images of more products.

[Ordnance Survey](#) used the UK Location Metadata Editor to create, edit and validate its metadata. Ordnance Survey created the Metadata Editor as a technical delivery partner for the UK Location Programme. The Metadata Editor was built using the GeoNetwork platform, and made available in two formats – a web-based online version and a downloadable version.

The metadata can be accessed [online](#).

For more information about the INSPIRE-compliant web map service, visit [Ordnance Survey's website](#).

Events:

- **The 25th International Cartographic Conference**
3 July 2011
Paris, France
- **9th Summer Institute of Geographic Information Science - 2nd week**
17 to 23 July
Florence, Italy
- **CoastGIS 2011**
5 to 8 September
Oostende, Belgium
- **International NSDI Conference in Skopje**
19 to 20 September
Skopje,
FYR Macedonia

Data Mapping Community People Society
 Location Framework Interoperability Reliable Sustainable Accurate
 Transformational Government **EuroGeographics** Place Longevity
 Information Infrastructure Quality Geographic
 Durable



Data People Society
Mapping Community Sustainable Accurate
Framework Reliability Place Longevity
Location Interoperability Government Authoritative Geographic
Transformational Information **EuroGeographics** Quality
Infrastructure Durable

EuroGeoInfo

We launched a new website providing a shop window for the wealth of information offered by our members.

At eurogeoinfo.eu, with a simple click on a map, you can discover the national spatial data infrastructures, products and services of 56 national mapping, land registry and cadastral agencies.



Commenting on the Commission's Green Paper on Funding for Research and Innovation

Developing new and exciting ways to use geographic information is important for everyone working in the sector so we were delighted to join our strategic partners, EuroSDR and AGILE for a recent meeting at the Directorate-General for Research.

During the discussions with Patricia Reilly, a member of the cabinet of Maire Geoghegan-Quinn and Commissioner responsible for Research, Innovation and Science, we presented our views on the Commission's Green Paper 'Towards a Common Strategic Framework for EU research & Innovation Funding' to explain why support for this area of geographic information is so important.

Our key points were:

- Policy and services development needs funding at European level for research and innovation to achieve harmonised accessibility and cross-border integration of information. We believe that this will reduce costs in businesses and public administration and stimulate innovative commercial applications.
- A more strategic, joined-up approach to funding is required to support the cycle of service innovation. The rules for matched funding need to be based on such an approach rather than a clear cut division between research and innovation. In addition, separate programmes currently exist for both areas and our view is that these need to be more integrated.
- A funding mechanism, using a feasibility study approach with cost benefit analysis, testing and validation elements for innovation projects, is required to support long-term research infrastructure activities.
- There is a role for science organisations and domain associations to contribute their immense knowledge in the evaluation of project proposals.

Spotlight on EuroGeographics' pan-European datasets and services

EuroGeographics' members invest around €1.5 billion in the development of geographical information each year and use cutting-edge technology to create, manage, maintain and make available authoritative national databases. Together they are developing an infrastructure to integrate their national data – including topographic and land information – to deliver the definitive pan-European location framework for a wide range of uses. By sharing best practice and creating standard data specifications and policies, we aim to ensure that members' individual geographical databases are compatible and can interact with one another.

We produce a range of pan-European datasets and services created through the active contribution of members and in cooperation with both private business and academic resources:

- EuroBoundaryMap, a seamless database of administrative boundaries
- EuroRegionalMap, a topographic reference dataset at the scale 1: 250 000
- EuroGlobalMap, a topographic dataset at the scale 1:1 million
- EuroDEM, a mosaic of members' national elevation data providing a digital representation of the ground surface topography of 38 countries
- EuroGeoNames, the infrastructure through which the gazetteers of official names maintained by the National Mapping and Cadastral Agencies across Europe are made available to users. This is currently undergoing user testing before wider commercial release.

Each edition of the EuroGeographics *Messenger* will focus on a different product or service – read how [EuroBoundaryMap](#) is helping [NAVTEQ](#) to reference road data in the next issue. To find out how our datasets could benefit you, see the use cases on our [website](#).

Spatial data for swift decision-making and disaster management

When red mud burst from a reservoir and swept through parts of Hungary in October 2010, the country's government turned to the The Institute of Geodesy, Cartography and Remote Sensing (FÖMI), subsidiary of the Department of Land Administration, Ministry of Rural Development in Hungary for crucial data and analysis to help control the flood.

The accident, at an alumina sludge reservoir in Ajka, saw around 1 million cubic metres of highly alkaline, and corrosive, watered red mud flow into 800-hectares of farmland and a 3.5-hectare built-up area. Nine people died and 123 were injured with both citizens and nature at risk from the spill.



Swift action by FÖMI in supplying high resolution Digital Elevation Model data for modeling the downflow of red mud was vital in protecting areas not yet affected by the flood. The modeling was carried out by the Department of Hydraulic and Water Resources Engineering at the Budapest University of Technology and Economics. FÖMI also provided 0.5 m resolution orthophotos and ordered recent satellite images for the Catastrophe Defense Authority.

Within just two days, FÖMI also carried out data analysis using the Central Unified Land Registry database and the Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS) of Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS) to aid government decision-making. Analyses included:

- Land Use on polluted areas
- Building Categories affected by flood
- Natura2000 lands
- Ownership (both private and public) of cadastral parcels
- Mortgages
- LPIS Categories
- Categories of Area Based Subsidies

Switzerland as you've never seen it before!

The third edition of the hugely popular interactive Atlas of Switzerland - a collaboration of the Federal Statistical Institute of Technology, Zurich; the Federal Office of Topography (swisstopo); and the Federal Statistical Office – contains 2,000 maps covering seven themes; facts and figures; and a fascinating new function for star-gazers. Together this information provides a comprehensive resource for study, discovery, analysis and comparison, presenting the country in an entirely unique way and from countless different viewpoints.

SPOT satellite imagery provides realistic 3D images of the terrain, and with the panorama function, users can climb to any desired height and admire the spectacular landscape. The names of mountains can also be displayed. There is even a function for revealing the secrets of the sky at night. Just enter your position on the map, indicate the time of your observation, and the sky will begin to display all the stars and planets – a total of more than 120,000 celestial bodies!

The Atlas demonstrates how organisations can cooperate to combine their data with state-of-the-art technologies to produce an information resource that benefits all sections of society. More information [here](http://www.atlasderschweiz.ch/atlas/en/) or <http://www.atlasderschweiz.ch/atlas/en/>

Did you know?

EuroGeographics is a not-for-profit organisation formed in 2001 as the membership association and representative body of the European national mapping, land registry and cadastral agencies.

EuroGeographics brings together 56 members from 44 countries across Europe and looks forward to further membership growth reflecting the ongoing changes taking place within Europe.

We work with members, academia and commercial companies to develop the 'building blocks of European geospatial interoperability'. Our most recent project, successfully completed in February 2011 was ESDIN.

Our European mapping currently consists of four pan-European geographic data sets and two web services.

As a European association we work closely with the European Commission and Parliament to support and deliver their policy and service initiatives.

