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eSDI-Net+

**European Network on
Geographic Information Enrichment and Reuse**

Public Conference

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1 OJ L 79, 24.3.2005, p. 1.

Abstract

The report of this deliverable D4.5 provides an overview of the participation of the eSDI-Net+ project at the INSPIRE 2010 Conference. In Krakow, Poland the final project presentation of eSDI-Net+ took place. Besides a pre-conference workshop on June 22nd, the eSDI-Net+ project was also represented by two paper presentations at the INSPIRE conference.

Keywords

Deliverable, WP4, Public conference, INSPIRE, Community, Dissemination, Awareness, Target groups, Sustainability

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1   Introduction

The objective of eSDI-Net+ is to bring together existing SDI key players and target users in a Thematic Network established as a platform for communication and exchange between different stakeholders involved in the creation and use of SDIs. The network promotes decisions made at the European level and fosters technical discussion and information exchange at the national and sub-national levels, in order to increase awareness concerning the importance of GI enrichment and reuse, to allow an integrated view of the experts and to permit the creation of integrated guidelines, standards, and implementation of best practices. The project aim is to implement communication mechanisms between the European and local levels to maximize the benefits of INSPIRE and GMES regarding the digital GI content.

In the past three years the eSDI-Net+ project and its results have been presented at the most important European and national GI events, such as EC-GI and GIS workshops, AGILE Conference, EUROGI Open Day, GISIG meetings, etc. at the European level and conferences such as ASITA (Italy) at the national level. For a detailed overview of past conference and event participations of eSDI-Net+ project partners please refer to Annex E of deliverable D4.1-3 Dissemination and Awareness Plan. A more detailed breakdown of the conferences and events in 2010 can be found in Annex A. Event calendar 2010 of the same document as well as in the event calendar at the eSDI-Net+ website under http://www.esdinetplus.eu/events/past.html.

The INSPIRE Conference 2010, being the final international conference within the project period, was used as an opportunity to present the eSDI-Net+ project achievements to the GI community and the broad public. It was also a point of arrival and an occasion to present the activities that have been carried out and, simultaneously, an occasion for some reflection to support the future sustainability planning. The conference attracted 670 participants from 50 countries.

The following chapters summarise the efforts of the eSDI-Net+ participation at this years INSPIRE Conference.

2 eSDI-Net+ at the INSPIRE Conference 2010

This year's INSPIRE Conference took place from June 22-25, 2010. The eSDI-Net+ project was represented by the pre-conference workshop "European SDI Best Practices in Dialogue" and the papers "Operational SDIs: The Sub National Dimension in the European Context" by Joachim Rix, Swetlana Fast and Ian Masser and "SDI assessment looking towards the European Interoperability Framework" by Sergio Farruggia and Franco Vico.

The conference was an opportunity for the eSDI-Net+ project to promote the twelve highly commended as European Best Practices, selected from 135 regional and local Spatial Data Infrastructures in 26 countries in Europe, as examples of successful SDI developments from the European to the local level. The major goal of the workshop and the project presentations was to showcase the SDI best practices to the community in order to build up further awareness about needs and opportunities for the development of Spatial Data Infrastructures in the future on the regional, national and European level following the INSPIRE initiative.

More details about the conference are available at the INSPIRE 2010 Website (http://inspire.jrc.ec.europa.eu/events/conferences/inspire_2010/).

2.1 Workshop

Different outstanding Spatial Data Infrastructures (SDIs) introduced their best practices at the eSDI-Net+ Workshop "European SDI Best Practices in Dialogue". On Tuesday, 22nd of June 2010 three best practice examples from twelve highly commended European SDIs presented and demonstrated the key factors of their success towards the INSPIRE implementation at the sub-national level. The aim of the workshop was to highlight outstanding SDI best practices as examples of successful local and regional SDI developments and intensify the dialogue in the GI and INSPIRE community. It attracted an international audience of about 60 participants.

SDIs from very local to cross-border scale were presented at this workshop. In accordance to this year's theme of the conference "INSPIRE as a Framework for Cooperation", the workshop drew attention to promising SDI solutions in Europe and motivated the SDIs to exchange experiences and to learn from each other. This was the main message of the network coordinator Joachim Rix reflecting the experiences of the project.

The three presented SDIs IDERioja (Spain), ForthValleyGIS (Scotland) and X-Border GDI (Netherlands) are examples of the Best Practices elected by an international jury and presented at the international conference in Turin, Italy in November 2009. Speakers presented their solutions, focusing on the key factors of their success. Alan Moore, the Chief executive of the ForthValleyGIS, emphasized, that not only technical issues, but even more organisational and institutional elements are crucial factors to build an SDI. "Infrastructure engineering is very much driven by business needs to build an SDI. In fact we are a SDI company, offering services to our users." (Alan Moore, ForthValleyGIS) The users receive the specific information they ask for, instead of being overloaded. Besides this, the estimated cost savings using these services are about 30-40% in comparison to doing the data preparation by the users themselves.

Besides the provision of viewing services and free of charge data provision, the speakers emphasized the necessity of the information exchange with the user community and other SDIs. "Cooperation, transparency and communication are the key", stated Sven Robertz from the X-Border GDI. Solutions considering the cultural and lingual differences like the multilingual thesaurus offered by the X-Border GDI are of great help in this context. The example of the Spanish SDI IDERioja presented by Ana García de Vicuña showed the historical development of this SDI during the last decade, becoming the mature SDI that IDERioja is today.

Figure 1. eSDI-Net+ Workshop at the INSPIRE Conference 2010

All presentations held at this workshop are available at the INSPIRE Conference Website (http://inspire.jrc.ec.europa.eu/events/conferences/inspire_2010/conf_skd_workshop.cfm):

- European SDI Best Practices in Dialogue, Joachim Rix (http://inspire.jrc.ec.europa.eu/events/conferences/inspire_2010/presentations/WS-eSDI-Net+-Opening_and_closing.pdf)

- IDERioja: Spatial Data Infrastructure of the Government of La Rioja(Spain), Ana García de Vicuña, Gonzalo López, Ricardo Corredor (http://inspire.jrc.ec.europa.eu/events/conferences/inspire_2010/presentations/WS-eSDI-Net+-IDERioja.pdf)

- Regional Shared Data Infrastructure, Alan Moore (http://inspire.jrc.ec.europa.eu/events/conferences/inspire_2010/presentations/WS-eSDI-Net+-fvgis.pdf)

- X-border-GDIA living cross-border co-operation, Sven Robertz / Frans van der Storm (http://inspire.jrc.ec.europa.eu/events/conferences/inspire_2010/presentations/WS-eSDI-Net+-X-border-GDI.pdf)

The presentations have also been uploaded at the eSDI-Net+ website under http://www.esdinetplus.eu/publications.html.

Information on workshops at other events is available in the deliverable D4.4 Workshops.

2.2   Paper Presentations

During the INSPIRE Conference the experiences made in the eSDI-Net+ project were also introduced in the presentations "Operational SDIs: The Sub-National Dimension in the European Context" by Joachim Rix and "SDI Assessment - Looking towards the European Interoperability Framework" by Sergio Farruggia. For the abstracts of the papers please refer to Annexes A and B.

Further information on the outstanding SDI best practices can be found at http://www.esdinetplus.eu/best_practice/outstanding.html.

2.3   Dissemination and Awareness Raising

The eSDI-Net+ workshop as well as the paper presentations at the INSPIRE Conference have been announced prior to the conference through various media. Besides the regular announcement on the project website (see fig. 2) the news about the project participation at the INSPIRE Conference has been distributed via press releases, flyers and the eSDI-Net+ newsletter.
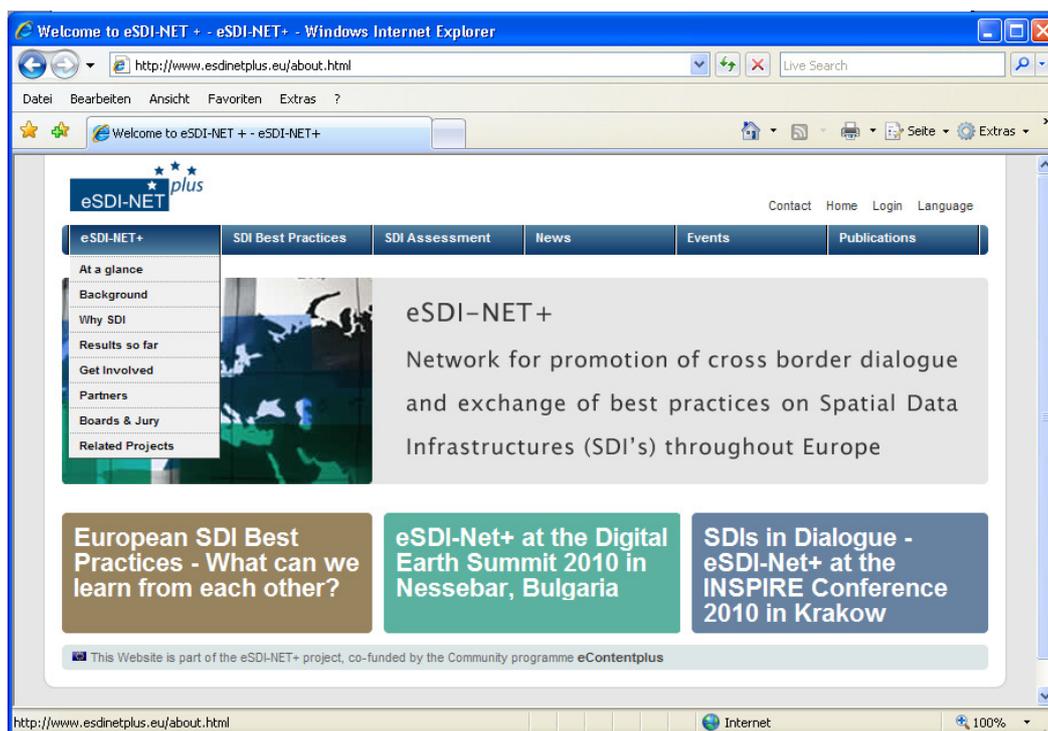

Figure 2. INSPIRE Conference announcement at the eSDI-Net+ Welcome Website

For the INSPIRE Conference 2010 a joint flyer of eSDI-Net+ and its post-project umbrella organisation EUROGI - European umbrella organisation for geographic information - has been developed. Furthermore, a press release containing information on the long-term sustainability of the project has been prepared and distributed among the conference participants and to the wider GI community by all project partners.

For further information on this dissemination material please refer to the deliverable D4.3-3 Dissemination Materials (Annex D). These flyers are also available at the public eSDI-Net+ website in the section "Dissemination materials" under http://www.esdinetplus.eu/publications.html.

The news about the participation of eSDI-Net+ at the INSPIRE 2010 Conference was also published at the sites of the project partners, e.g. HUNAGI, EUROGI, GISIG, AGISEE and others.

Annex A. eSDI-Net+ Paper Abstract I

Operational SDIs:
The Sub National Dimension in the European Context

J. Rix[1], S. Fast[1], I. Masser[2]

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[2] *Senior consultant, Chair of the eSDI-Net+ Jury , Buxton, UK*

Technological development and increasing awareness about the use of geographical data have compelled the fast growing of digital content. This growth has not been accompanied by dissemination and accessibility measures. Spatial Data Infrastructures (SDI) allowing extensive GI reuse intend to be a solution for these problems. Nowadays, the SDIs are facing organisational, technological, legal as well as cultural and linguistic challenges. To learn from each other how to overcome these obstacles and to exchange experiences Europe wide among local, national and regional initiatives, is the aim of the European project eSDI-Net+.

The spatial data infrastructure (SDI) field goes back twenty years but it did not really take off until about ten years ago. Since then it has been transformed by two momentous developments. The first of these is the accelerated diffusion of SDIs throughout the world during the last ten years. As a result, most countries in Europe have now taken steps to implement at least one component of a national SDI. The INSPIRE initiative has played an important role in promoting this diffusion process in Europe but similar developments have taken place throughout the whole world.

The second momentous event is the shift in emphasis that has taken place in the second generation of SDIs from national (strategic) SDIs to sub national (operational) SDIs (Masser et al 2009). Whereas a great deal of the discussion in earlier years revolved around *talking* about (national) SDIs much more time is currently being spent of discussing different ways of *doing* (sub national) SDIs and success at the sub national level has become a crucial yardstick of overall success.

These two developments have been recognised in a number of recent European initiatives. These include a workshop on Advanced Regional SDIs that was held at the Joint Research Centre in Ispra in May 2008 (Craglia et al 2009) and the series of national and regional workshops organised throughout Europe as part of the eSDI-Net+ project (http://www.esdinetplus.eu/), a thematic network co-funded by the eContentplus Programme of the European Commission.

The objective of eSDI-Net+ is to bring together existing SDI key players and target users in a Thematic Network established as a platform for communication and exchange between different stakeholders involved in the creation and use of SDI's. The network promotes Europe-wide decisions as well as sub-national, national and regional discussion and information exchange, in order to increase awareness concerning the importance of GI

enrichment and of SDI's for GI reuse, to allow an integrated view of the experts and to permit the creation of integrated guidelines, standards, and implementation of best practices.

Significant results were achieved towards characterisation of existing SDI implementations throughout Europe. In 2008 and 2009, the Network identified more than 170 working, accessible and intelligible solutions. To analyse and assess these solutions, a unique SDI assessment methodology has been developed by the eSDI-Net+ consortium. This methodology considered the cultural, technical and legal differences in different European countries and provided a common evaluation framework applicable for SDI's not only in Europe.

After an initial evaluation of the applications on a regional level, a number of promising SDIs has been selected for detailed interviews to provide further information. Each interviewed SDI was evaluated by the national representatives of the eSDI-Net+ project, focusing on the key aspects such as:

1   Technological, innovative level and originality of the project

2. Implementation and/or readiness for INSPIRE principles

3. Level of fostering cooperation between different users (proof of visibility and/or user feedback)

4. Possibility of extension or transfer to other countries and regions

All Spatial Data Infrastructures in Europe were invited to submit their best practice and be part of the fast growing network of SDIs. In the last 2 years, twelve national and regional SDI Best Practice workshops were organised throughout Europe. The workshops focussed on common issues, usability and socio-economic impact of SDI's and addressed the integration between SDI's and e-government policies. They brought together stakeholders, and showed use cases and addresses open questions.

Summarising the results of the workshops, promising solutions from different European regions have been recommended for further assessment with the final goal to present their developments at the European SDI Best Practice Award. The twelve award winners from 9 European countries were highly commended as European Best Practices, selected from 135 regional and local Spatial Data Infrastructures in 26 countries in Europe. The presentations at the eSDI-Net+ conference in Turin in November 2009 highlighted the diversity of current practice at the regional and local level in Europe and raise some important questions about the nature of SDIs. The main message for the Award Jury presented by Franco Vico was that "each Spatial Data Infrastructure is a special case." Nevertheless, the methodology developed is an approach to categorize SDIs, having clearly in mind that each SDI has some special characters.

In the next stage, the eSDI-Net+ project will promote these best practices as examples of successful SDI developments through its website and further publication. The project partners will also provide those experiences made with the analysis, evaluation, and best practices in national and regional workshops, as a return of investment to those, who participated in the award selection process and to showcase those SDIs to the community to build up further awareness about needs and opportunities the development of Spatial Data Infrastructures will have in the future on the regional, national and European level following the INSPIRE initiative.

Even the development of the project has a focus on Europe and the INSPIRE development process, the results with the methodology and the experiences made can be useful also as a model for an international discussion.

Following the long term perspective of the project to establish a network and a platform for discussion and exchange of experiences, this can be of major interest not only for the SDI developers and users of sub-national, national or regional SDIs in Europe, but also for the dialogue in other regions of the world, working on similar developments, to strengthen the international dimension, following the eSDI-Net+ project results.

References:

- Masser I. and Rix J, 2009. *European SDI Best Practice Awards 2009 - Chairman's report of the eSDI-NET+ jury regarding the best practice awards*, URL: http://www.esdinetplus.eu/get_involved/jury.html

- Methodology (Deliverable D2.1)

- Craglia, M. and M. Campagna, 2009. *Advanced regional spatial data infrastructures in Europe*, Ispra: Joint Research Centre Institute for Environment and Sustainability.

- eSDI-Net+: http://www.esdinetplus.eu/

Annex B. eSDI-Net+ Paper Abstract II

SDI Assessment Looking Towards the European Interoperability Framework

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[2] *Politecnico di Torino, Turin, Italy*

A Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) is one of the most necessary bricks to build a pervasive and complete range of eGovernment services. Bearing such a context in mind the opportunity offered by the Evaluation Framework to describe subnational SDI (2008) and the evaluation criteria (2009) carried out within the eSDINetplus project (http://www.esdinetplus.eu/) is a propitious opportunity even to collect information on SDI compliance with the European Interoperability Framework (EIF).

SDI EF methodology was applied on 135 sub-national SDIs from 26 Countries in Europe, in order to identify European "best practices", i.e. practices from which something can be learned. The result of that analysis was shown at the eSDI-Net+ Award Conference (Turin, 26th-27th November 2009). The aims of eSDI-Netplus Project, the assessment process followed as well as the results of the award initiative are described in another submitted paper: Rix et al, "Operational SDIs: The Sub National Dimension in the European Context".

The indicators matrix built by eSDI-Net+ Project can be re-used from a different point of view, in order to measure a confidence degree of SDI with respect to the European Interoperability Framework.

For each of the Underlying Principles introduced by the draft of the EIFv2.0 (IDABC 2008) an aggregation of a pertinent set of eSDI-Net+ indicators was carried out. EIF Underlying Principles represent the foundations on which the EIF is built and they even provide additional guidance by describing important aspects that every stakeholder needs to keep in mind when implementing any Public Services with a pan-European dimension. Taken together, they outline the overall intent of the EIF, and provide guidelines for decisions that must be taken concerning details related to implementation of Pan-European eGovernment Services (PEGS).

Proposed process does not need two separate assessments but provides two points of view, carried out from the same evaluation, based on a different indicator aggregation. On the one hand, the SDI assessment according to the eSDI-Net+ five main criteria is achieved and, on the other, a measurement of the confidence degree of the same SDI organisation with respect to every EIF Underlying Principle is acquired. So, SDI managers and stakeholders could take advantage of EIF Underlying Principle compliance assessment, auto-verifying the strengths and the weaknesses on which to take actions in order to improve the interoperability of their organisation, in tune with the definition of such a characteristic given in the EIFv2.0, hence orienting its services towards a Pan-European eGovernment services.

Of course, the same approach could be integrated into an SDI "best practice" identification, as eSDI-Net+ initiative: in this case a possible useful purpose could be that to enhance the communication between SDI community and pan-European eGovernment programmes. In this context, an EIF compliance assessment of SDIs could even be used as a tool to collect information in order to monitor SDI evolution, for instance following GI strategic vision changes.

Finally, the same collected information could be useful, on the other hand, as a contribution for the EIF evolution over time. In this regard, it could provide subjects for analysis, debate and comparison, that engage wider SDI stakeholder target groups, i.e. not only "SDI experienced stakeholders" but also persons or institutions, who can improve the following actions:

• Underpinning SDIs' development considering SDIs as one of the most necessary bricks to build a pervasive and complete range of e-government services;

• Promoting the mutual contamination between GI and other innovative ICT and organization solutions.

The presentation will show the method implemented to aggregate eSDI-Net+ indicators into EIF UPs: an analysis of the level of compliance with respect to the main UPs for the regional and local SDIs will be described.

The work done is at a preliminary stage. In fact, the refinement of the methodology to assess SDI compliance with EIF has to wait for two needed actions:

• definition of an eSDI-Net+ SDIs self assessment framework

• the final version of the EIF v2.0.

Over two years, since February 2008, eSDI-Net+ Project has produced a "Methodology for describing sub-national SDIs", derived from that an "Evaluation Framework", defined criteria, indicators, weighted indexes in order to assess subnational SDIs, and, what is more important, experimented all this process against 135 SDIs. The adopted methodology and the overall evaluation process were appreciated by various people.

In the background of all this process there is a "model" of SDI, an opinion on what the key factors are... The Project, and in particular the Award Jury, in its discussions, understood that some indicators had poor indicating qualities, others were ambiguous... The Jury also realized that some indicators were significantly descriptive but not useful in assessing SDIs.

With this in mind, a final task of the eSDI-Net+ is to review all this process done, now not under the pressure of the awards. The aim is to produce a framework to be used for SDIs self-assessment and, while the final goal of the Project is to establish a network, to facilitate comparisons among SDIs.

The experiences related to the methodology elaborated and applied in eSDI-Net+ are a real value. After revisiting them the methodology should serve as a guideline for selfassessments for the benefit of all service providers but the approach might also be applicable in the INSPIRE monitoring on a multi-temporal basis.

As far as EIF is concerned the final version v2.0 will have to be considered. In fact, while this document being written the EIF v2.0 is still under revision: it will take the form of an official Commission position with the publication of a Communication from the Commission to the Council and to the Parliament. Such a process seems to be near the end and the final version will be ready. It might be different from the draft considered in this document.

For instance, a more current version of the draft that circulates on the web introduces 12 UPs instead of 10. Such underlying principles fall into three different categories instead of four:

- The first principle sets the frame for community action in the area of European Public Services;

- The next group of underlying principles reflect generic user needs and expectations (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8);

- The last group of underlying principles provides a foundation for collaboration between public administrations (9, 10, 11 and 12).

Specifically, they are:

Underlying Principle 1: Subsidiarity and Proportionality

Underlying Principle 2: User Centricity

Underlying Principle 3: Inclusion and Accessibility

Underlying Principle 4: Security and Privacy

Underlying Principle 5: Multilingualism

Underlying Principle 6: Administrative Simplification

Underlying Principle 7: Transparency

Underlying Principle 8: Preservation of Information.

Underlying Principle 9: Openness

Underlying Principle 10: Reusability

Underlying Principle 11: Technological Neutrality and Adaptability

Underlying Principle 12: Effectiveness and Efficiency

The information on the SDI compliance to the EIF UPs could be surely useful in general to meet the aims of SDIs development with respect to a wide range of requirements. For instance, the new definition of Interoperability, changing the focus from the ICT systems role to that of organization, can certainly underpin SDI evolution towards a closer path with European eGovernment services framework development, as advised by the INSPIRE NS Architecture report.

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Annex C. eSDI-Net+ Press Release 01/2010

Press Release 01/2010

eSDI-NET+: A NETWORK TO CONTINUE!

We are proud to announce that the achievements of the eSDI-NET+ project will be sustained and continued by EUROGI - *European Umbrella Organisation for Geographic Information* - after the end of the project in August 2010.

The eContent*plus* project eSDI-NET+ is a Thematic Network that aims at promoting the cross-border dialogue and exchange of best practices on Spatial Data Infrastructures (SDIs) throughout Europe. EUROGI with its experience as an umbrella and networking organisation is positively suited to ensure the long-term sustainability of the investment of the European Commission towards a European Spatial Data Infrastructure. As one of the initiators of the eSDI-NET+ project and leader of the work package on the *Identification and Analysis of Best Practices* EUROGI was furthermore strongly involved from the very beginning.

Specific future activities will include the maintenance of the eSDI-NET+ website and the continued updating of the database of SDIs according to the resources needed and the decisions already taken by the experts involved in the evaluation framework. EUROGI will furthermore involve the SDIs and the partners of the network in the workshops of EC-funded projects that EUROGI participates in.

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