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Spatial Data Infrastructures exchange experiences at the INSPIRE Conference 2010

Different outstanding Spatial Data Infrastructures (SDIs) introduced their best practices at the eSDI-Net+ Workshop „European SDI Best Practices in Dialogue” being part of the INSPIRE Conference 2010 in Krakow, Poland. 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.

During the INSPIRE Conference the experiences made in the eSDI-Net+ project are 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. The final consortium meeting took place in the week of the INSPIRE Conference 2010.

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

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

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