

From GeoReg to GeoRegis

Let's talk about the names of national mapping and cadastral organizations. Namely, looking for their names just in Europe, a variety of names and combinations appears. Looking globally, this variety is even wider, of course. Is it really necessary for all these organizations to retain their long tongue tangling names? Or is there at least a slight possibility that they could all adopt a simple common name?!

For a quick introduction to the subject, just take a look at the list of the national mapping and cadastral organizations, which are the members of EuroGeographics association, whose main mission and goal is to achieve interoperability of geographic information in Europe. You will find a real Babylonian mixture of names in that list. Of course, almost every country in Europe has its own language or even more languages in one country, so the different names are all understandable. But when you look closer, you can see that the organizations are not only different in organisational forms like institutes, committees, administrations, amts, etc. They are different in their contents, they can have geodesy or surveying in their names or not, and the same goes for land cadastre, cartography, real estate, etc., they are in organizations' names or not. But remember, the common mission and goal of all of them is to achieve interoperability of geographic information in Europe.

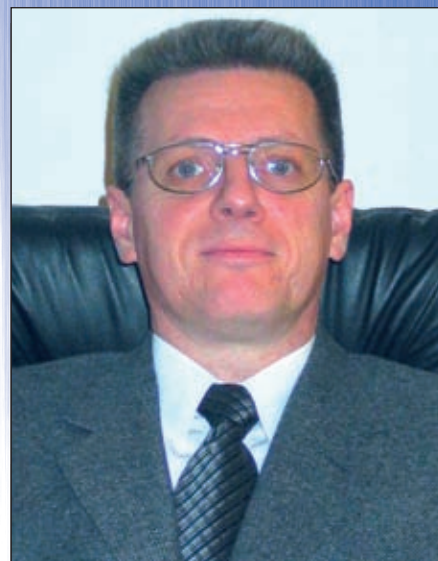
Why don't we choose a name of essence, which would tell everyone from Iceland to Turkey and from Portugal to Russia, what these organizations are and what they do?

So, why don't we all look at a common denominator of the activities and services of all these organizations and put them in one common name, which could then be used across the continent and be recognizable by its every citizen? Why don't we choose a name of essence, which would tell everyone from Iceland to Turkey and from

Portugal to Russia, what these organizations are and what they do? My suggestion is to choose a name that consists of just two syllables geo and reg, which draw their roots from Latin language. This way the possibilities to hurt any national prides are minimized.

Geo is obvious with so many words that start with it, beside geodesy there are many closely related terms, which belong to the common field of geosciences for a long time and also many newer terms, which are entering the main stream or are already firmly in it, like geoinformatics, geomatics, geolocating, georeferencing, geocoding, geostatistics, geodemographics, geosemantics, geotopology, etc. Reg represents the other half of the potential new common name, starting numerous Latin words related to regulating, renewing and maintaining cadastres and registries, like rega, regio, regionalis, regeneratio, regere, regerere, regestum, registrum, registratio, registrator, registrare, regula, regulare, regularis and regulatio.

The exact meaning of all these chosen exemplary terms can be found in dictionaries, but we need only a little bit of imagination to connect all these terms with the activities and services of the national mapping and cadastral organizations. So, let it be GeoReg across the continent, let's for example call the present Geodetska uprava Republike Slovenije simply GeoReg.si (www.georeg.si) and present Kort og Matrikelstyrelsen simply GeoReg.dk (www.georeg.dk) and present Kadaster en Openbare Registers simply GeoReg.nl (www.georeg.nl), etc. Then, one day, when we Europeans finally decide to form a common EU mapping and cadastral agency, we will be able to name it simply GeoReg.eu (www.georeg.eu). And the same philosophy we could use in product naming, giving the products a common root name georec to let everybody know, that any GeoReg agency is



Joc Triglav (jtriglav@geoinformatics.com) is editor and columnist of GeoInformatics..

offering standard quality interoperable georeferenced records of all kinds. When GeoReg agencies achieve this one day, they will become the real kings of geospatial world and their users will call them appropriately as GeoRegis!

Does this writing perhaps look like a fairy tale to you? It is for now, but it can become true. Let's start making it true by starting at the roots. It's all in the name. If we can agree on it, it will be much easier to agree on everything else, even on the matters we don't dare to dream about yet!