Building a geospatial society in Poland based on the INSPIRE Directive

Digitization improves the state’s efficiency

We must certainly define the priorities of building a digital state in which we can optimize our processes and ensure maximum efficiency in spending our funds, as well as the expenditures made by local government structures. After all, the ultimate goal is to ensure that the system which meets their needs in the best possible way, that is, to give them an efficient State. Spatial information

Spatial information

Spatial information (SI) has accompanied many human activities since times immemorial. Spatial information in the European Union is governed by Directive 2007/2/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 March 2007, which establishes the infrastructure for spatial information in the European Community (INSPIRE). According to the priority rule, the Community law is superior to the national legislation of EU member-states. A key problem is whether Poland appropriately implements the INSPIRE Directive into its law and the infrastructure of spatial information. I refer to this question in my open letter to Karolena Vela, the EU Commissioner for the Environment, Maritime Affairs, and Fisheries (letter below).

Polish law

Poland has the most unstable law among all the European Union member-states. A study done by Grant Thornton’s analysts shows that in the years 2012-2014, the Polish lekarmer produced nearly 56 times more regulations than Sweden, 11 times more than Lithuania, and twice as many as Hungary (in the number and size of the adopted laws). This means that in none other EU country individuals and business are experienced a legal environment that is as volatile and unpredictable as in Poland. For instance, the greatest number of regulations has been adopted on the grounds of the Geodetic and Cartographic Law. And we now have 30 related ordinances which altogether cover more than 3,200 pages. A special time has come after March 2010, when the Geodetic and Cartographic Law was amended as many as 15 times.

If the INSPIRE Directive is to become an efficient instrument in the hands of central and local administration, it must accept some peculiarities of this country.

• to build cadastre nodes in all Polish counties (see attached map). Aka, 8 years after the adoption of the law on spatial infrastructure, only 157 counties (less than 50%) have such nodes, while in fact each of them should have one,

• to implement the concept of the spatial land management (2008), that is, to improve the land management order and, consequently, to improve the living comfort of the Polish people,

• and, last but not least, to serve the “goals of Community environmental policies and policies on activities which may potentially affect the natural environment.”

A delay in the transposition of the INSPIRE Directive into the Polish law is a barrier preventing the citizens and entrepreneurs from using the measurable benefits offered by the Directive and it causes major losses in the national economy.

Steps taken to merge the local, regional, and national geodata resource into a single integrated system can provide a seed for building a National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI).

Before that can be done, I must stress a peculiar shortcoming in this implementation, namely, the obligation to use European and world standards and amendments to the Geodetic and Cartographic law which do not follow the intention of the Directive and are structured in a different way than the respective EU regulations.

We cannot avoid such two questions in a great article, address you to the following questions in the attachments: The implementation of the Polish law of Directive 2007/2/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, dated March 14, 2007, which establishes the infrastructure for spatial information in the European Community (INSPIRE) includes major errors in relation to the original Directive.