

## IN SEARCH OF A WAY FORWARD FOR THE EFGS

By Lars H. Backer for the European Forum for GeoStatistics (EFGS)

This note is intended as proposal for a long term program for the EFGS. In our joint efforts to improve the harmonisation and usefulness the European statistical system, we believe that the integration of geography and statistics is the key to both this project and the building of a global system of geo- spatial information (a GGI) and a global system of geospatial information management (GGIM) to support it. The call is based on the now established principle that in the informational age complex systems are designed, built and developed with qualified reference systems according to the idea that *“If you cannot describe it, you cannot manage it.”* The models (or descriptions), required for this purpose will not be found; but must be deliberately designed, built and developed by the interaction of a more practical science and a more scientific practice, according to real (public- and private- ) user needs. We propose three projects for the development of the ESS to this end;

### PROJECT 1: A FIRST STEP TOWARDS A SHARED VISION FOR A GGI AND THE ROLE OF STATISTICS

We believe that *“A vision without action may be called a daydream, but action without a vision is a nightmare”*. The first project will respond to the need for a long- term vision for a the role of national statistical systems (NSS) in their government’s efforts to contribute to a well structured system of qualified information to serve as a shared GGI GGIM foundation for all Policies, Programs, Plans and Projects for sustainable development to serve sustainable development according to the ecological method.

### PROJECT 2: CREATE A POINT- BASED FOUNDATION FOR THE ESS

We further propose that we, the EFGS, in response to the long term visions emerging from project 1, take concrete action in its preparations for the next round European Census 2020 project to create a shared point- based foundation for all national statistical systems in Europe.

1. Why:
  - a. We need a better harmonization of the European Statistical System  
The ESS could adopt a common point-based foundation for its micro- data.
  - b. We need a system of comparable statistics suitable for cross- border spatial analysis.  
The ESS could use this point-based foundation in a grid strategy for spatial analysis.
  - c. We need to prepare for the integration of the ESS with other systems of information  
The ESS could use this effort to manifest its key role in the emerging GGI/GGIM
2. How:
  - a. A GEOSTAT Essnet step by step project to build a point- based foundation for statistics to be implemented full scale in the 2020 round of EU censuses.
  - b. A GEOSTAT project to develop a manual and a program for training for the building of a point- based- foundation for the European Statistical System for implementation in 2020.
  - c. A GEOSTAT Project to build and develop a network of NSI taskforces to develop national point- and grid systems to meet this challenge according to their own conditions

### PROJECT 3: TO RECOGNITION FOR THE EFGS AS AN ESS / NSI NETWORK OF EXCELLENCE

We finally propose that the DGINS takes action to consolidate the EFGS organization and provide it with the necessary ESS mandate to serve as a professional reference for issues related to GeoStatistics.