
European Forum for Geography and Statistics

MINUTES - EFGS/GFGS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Time: Thursday Oct 10, 2019 at 1715-1830hrs
Place: Manchester, Radisson Blu Edwardian
Chairman: EFGS President Janusz Dygaszewicz
Participants: Ana Santos - Statistics Portugal
 Anna Slawinska - Statistics Poland
 Dermot Corcoran - Statistics Ireland
 Dominique Laurent - IGN France
 Chris Gale - ONS UK
 Egert Indres - Statistics Estonia
 Igor Kuzma - Statistics Slovenia
 Jerker Moström - Statistics Sweden
 Joshua Commenetz - US Census Bureau
 Karin Hedeklint - Statistics Sweden
 Marina Backer Skaar - EFGS Secretary
 Marek Pieniazek - Statistics Poland
 Mirosław Migacz - Statistics Poland
 Pasi Piela - Statistics Finland
 Nikos Roubanis - EUROSTAT
 Rina Tammisito - Statistics Finland
 Vilni Verner Holst Bloch - Statistics Norway

EFGS chairman Janusz Dygaszewicz welcomed everyone by presenting EFGS achievements and current work since last year's conference in Helsinki in October 2018 - see attached presentation.

The following was discussed and agreed upon:

- **EFGS Current Work Program – highlights**
 - Contribution to development of 'Best Practices' in the European production of geostatistics
 - Completion of the GFGS Europe (through the GEOSAT4 project) including implementation support within the NSI organizations. Encourage Member States to implement the framework
 - Strong communication and promotion of the benefits of geocoding is needed within European statistical offices. As of today, too many within the statistical community still lack skill and understanding on how to use GIS to manage data in space incl geostatistical data.
 - Aim is to support EUROSTAT in their effort to complete a fully geocoded European population and housing census in 2021. Full support is needed.
 - Further development of partnership between NSI and NMCA/NMI on equal terms, where an important issue is to manage data in space incl geostatistical data. Strong cooperation is needed

- **EFGS Activities - highlights**
 - EFGS will continue to act as a reference group for EUROSTAT and the project group for the next GEOSTAT4 project.
 - Status as an official Observer Organization of UN-GGIM: Europe (since 2015)
 - Members of EFGS actively participate in many initiatives on European and global level
 - EFGS website has been maintained and updated by Statistic Poland. Members of the community also contribute to its continuous development.

- **EFGS Challenges - highlights**
 - To find common territory is the statistical challenges for development of harmonized geostatistical reference system based on "the 10 Level Model"
 - Works on cooperation and common approach to link statistical data with geospatial

information with UN-GGIM Europe and Eurogeographics. A challenge to consider is that UN-GGIM Europe mainly has representation from mapping agencies, although much of the work is statistical phenomena. Would a solution for more NSI involvement be through an action on high-level and a 'Letter of Intent'?

- Geo-enabling SDG indicators – a selection of spatial indicators would support
- Implementation of EU Regulation 2018/1799 of 21 November 2018 concerning the dissemination of selected topics of the 2021 population and housing census geocoded to a 1 km² grid
- Finalise the methodological work on the GSGF for Europe and encourage Member States to implement the framework
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Choice of grids in European and global perspective
- Harmonized protection of census data in the ESS – deliverables of the ESS project

- **EFGS Onwards**

- Further promotion of integration of statistical and geospatial information through the use of GIS within NSIs
- Further debate on grids in European and global perspective
- Next context for EFGS to contribute will be the next ESS project 'GEOSTAT4' starting in February 2020. Through the SC EFGS will play an active role in a couple of WPs e.g. EFGS webpage and the strengthening of EFGS community by organizing two more annual conferences.

- **EFGS SC**

- EFGS Steering Committee will continue to be active during 2020 with regular meetings
- As per October 2019 SC members have representatives from 12 NSI and EUROSTAT
- Important issues to be discussed
 - Next year – 2020
 - EFGS Vision and Leadership.
 - Continuation after GEOSTAT projects 2021
 - Strategic outlook and long-term program
 - Broaden the SC committee and the network group
 - Training and capacity building. In collaboration with EUROSTAT find a way to develop a program for training statisticians to use GIS. A response to the need for broadening the use of the statistical manual (from GEOSTAT4) for geospatial implementation within European NSIs.
 - Long term maintenance of the EFGS web
 - Find our path – in theory and in practical terms
 - Role of President and tasks for SC members
 - How can new members contribute? A guide of some sort??
 - Cooperation with UN-GGIM Europe, Eurogeographics, UNECE
 - General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
 - Two-Three years ahead – 2021-2023
 - Where and how?
 - SDG
 - New data and tools – lots of tools to be explored. Our imagination is the limit!
 - Exploratory geostatistical data analysis
 - Quality issues – what is a 'happy user'. Each country responsible.

- **GFGS**

- The chairman of the GFGS Subgroup of the EFGS Vilni Verner Holst Bloch summarized the activities and efforts for EFGS to expand to a global level
 - Voluntary forum est. 2014 as task force to EFGS
 - Supported by UN ECE and Eurostat (web and tele solutions)
 - Voluntary Project FairHair -> focus on comparisons of grids
 - Statisticians, geographers, researchers, programmers (22 Participants from 4 continents)
 - Web site under construction at UN ECE wiki
 - Sandbox environment will be developed
 - OGC DGGs compliant grid data for testing has been uploaded
 - A GFGS logo has been drafted
 - Attendance at EFGS, GISCO, UN ECE GGIIM etc

- **Next GA meeting:** EFGS Conference in Poland end of October 2020.