



Preparations for a European Region of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management



(UN-GGIM: Europe)

Notes from the UN-GGIM: Europe side event, held on 5th of August at the 4th session of the UN-GGIM Committee of Experts, New York (Version 3.1¹ 11 November 2014)

0. Agenda

Item	Topic	Who
1	Welcome and Introduction	Bengt Kjellson (Sweden)
2	Purpose of the meeting	Bengt Kjellson
3	Preparatory Process for establishing UN-GGIM: Europe	Gunter Schäfer (European Commission)
4	UN-GGIM4 Report from European regional entity	Pascal Berteaud (France)
5	Preparations for 1st Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM: Europe – Date and Venue – Agenda – Executive Committee Elections – Proposals for a secretariat – Draft work plan	Bengt Kjellson

1. Introduction and purpose of the meeting (Bengt Kjellson)

In a meeting held on 2nd October 2013 in Warsaw, the preparatory committee on UN-GGIM: Europe informed European countries on the progress made in the preparation of UN-GGIM: Europe, and the roadmap leading towards its establishment. The preparatory work should focus on drafting a comprehensive report on the situation of geospatial information management in Europe, and on determining the Articles and Rules for a European regional Committee of UN-GGIM.

The preparatory committee submitted the report and the Articles and Rules to the UN-GGIM secretariat on 8 May 2014, and will present a summary to the Committee of Experts on 8 August 2014.

The purpose of this meeting was to inform European countries on the establishment process, the content of the report to the UN-GGIM secretariat, and the next steps until the actual

¹ Hansjörg Kutterer omitted from original attendance list. Marcus Wandinger assigned to the wrong organisation in v3.0





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establishment of UN-GGIM: Europe. This was to make sure that all countries had the full picture and to give them the possibility to ask questions to the preparatory committee, something that would not be possible during the Committee of Experts meeting.

2. Preparatory Process for establishing UN-GGIM: Europe (Gunter Schäfer)

On request from Paul Cheung, at the time Director of the United Nations Statistics Division, Vanessa Lawrence, co-chair of the Committee of Experts on UN-GGIM and Walter Radermacher, Chief Statistician of the European Union, agreed to chair a preparatory committee that should oversee the establishment of UN-GGIM: Europe. The involvement of Walter Radermacher should ensure a strong role for statistical information and its integration with geospatial information in the scope of UN-GGIM: Europe. This was considered one of the priorities of the European regional committee from the outset.

The initial preparatory committee was set up in restricted composition, with a strong representation of European institutions involved in geospatial information management. This restricted committee essentially focussed on planning and structuring the establishment process. Their main concern was to build as much as possible on existing structures and material, avoiding any duplication of efforts in the establishment process.

At the meeting in October 2013 in Warsaw, European countries agreed to the proposal of the preparatory committee to create three working groups (see below) concentrating on three different clusters of focus points, and to extend its composition with the chairs of these three working groups. The main task of this extended preparatory committee was to guide the work of the working groups and compile a report to the UN-GGIM committee of experts.

The report was widely discussed within the extended preparatory committee and with countries and submitted to the UN-GGIM secretariat on 8 May 2014. This essentially concluded the work of the preparatory committee. Through this report the European countries were seeking the Expert Committee's endorsement of the establishment of UN-GGIM: Europe.

3. UN-GGIM4 Report from European regional entity (Pascal Berteaud)

The goal of the three working groups was to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the current situation of geospatial information management in Europe and, building on this analysis to propose several priority areas for future work under UN-GGIM: Europe. The topics of the three working groups were:

- Working group 1 led by Pascal Berteaud, France – Data definition and access conditions;





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- Working group 2 led by Bengt Kjellson, Sweden – Interoperability and data infrastructures for geospatial information;
- Working group 3 led by Ezio Bussoletti, Italy – Institutional arrangements supporting the goals of UN-GGIM.

The results of the three working groups were used to compile the report to the Committee of experts.

Working group 3 was mainly charged with drafting Articles and Rules for the future UN-GGIM: Europe. These rules were developed in an intensive consultation process involving all possible stakeholders. From the start they were also discussed with the UN secretariat to make sure they were in line with general UN principles. The Articles and Rules take into consideration specific European aspects such as INSPIRE, the strong role of statistical information and its high level of organisation in the European Statistical System, and the unique role of the European Union and its institutions, compared to other regions.

The UN-GGIM Inventory of Issues represented the framework for the work of Working Group 1 and 2 to ensure an easy reporting to the global level.

Working group 1 mainly concentrated on the idea of a set of harmonised, core geospatial data and how the production of these core data should be organised and financed. A great deal of harmonisation work has been already done thanks to the legal requirements of INSPIRE, open data in many Member States have now been released and at the European level the Copernicus program is creating a sizable amount of harmonised open data that could be regarded as core. Also various projects building on INSPIRE such as ELF are contributing to the technical infrastructure for the production and distribution of core data. However, regarding the full harmonisation of data definitions from the national to the global level, and the funding of the production of these harmonised data for all of Europe a lot of work still has to be done.

Working group 2 focussed on the integration of geospatial with other thematic, mainly statistical information. NMCAs and Statistical offices operate in a different organisational context where statistical offices can rely on a body of European legal acts, a strong organisational framework, and a strong European quality framework in the form of the Code of Practice for European statistics. Semantic and technical barriers between geospatial and other information domains exist. On the other hand there are also similarities such as the emergence of alternative data sources (Big and Crowd sourced data), and a demand for more detailed and more up-to-date information. Joint projects leading to better integrated information will help to answer user demand, and create synergies between public authorities.





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UN-GGIM: Europe should form the platform for working on the topics outlined by Working Group 1 and 2, and the draft work program of UN-GGIM: Europe will be based on their analysis.

4. Preparations for 1st Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM: Europe

After the submission of the report to the UN secretariat, the preparatory committee concluded its work. France and Sweden have kindly agreed to organise the first official meeting of UN-GGIM: Europe with the support of EuroGeographics.

This first meeting of UN-GGIM: Europe will be held on the 1st of October 2014 in Chisinau (Moldavia). Invitations and a draft agenda will be circulated during the second half of August. In this communication also a proposal on how to establish a UN-GGIM: Europe secretariat will be made. The agenda will be divided into an organisational part, mainly dealing with the elections, and a more content related part focussed on the discussion of the draft work program.

The Executive Committee will be elected at this first meeting. Nominations should be presented to EuroGeographics headquarters/France/Sweden no later than 11th of September 2014. This will allow for enough time to inform all Members of UN-GGIM: Europe on the profile of candidates. It was reminded that each official representative of a country leading the national delegation should be formally appointed by his or her government. It was also reminded that in each delegation, several organisations may participate, and that ahead of the plenary meeting the official representative should organise a coordination and consultation process with all national geospatial stakeholders.

The draft work program in its current form represents a high level summary of topics discussed in the report to the Committee of experts. It was not meant to be a final proposal and Member States are kindly invited to comment. It is planned to have two more versions of the draft work program discussed before the meeting on the 1st October. Comments should be directed to France or Sweden, as indicated in the invitation letter (see annex).

Countries should have in mind that in 2016, the ECOSOC will take a decision on the continuation and future form of UN-GGIM. Against this background the priority between now and the ECOSOC decision should be to convince governments of the usefulness and relevance of UN-GGIM.

Comments

- Countries were keen to emphasise their view that UN-GGIM could not create legal obligations which they should comply with. UN-GGIM Secretariat confirmed this;





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- Clarification was sought about the UN geography which should determine membership of UN-GGIM: Europe. UN-GGIM Secretariat confirmed that there was no formal geography Member States may choose to be members of more than one Regional Committee;

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and contributing and closed the meeting.

5. Actions until the 1st UN-GGIM: Europe plenary

#	What	Who	When
1	Send out invitation, agenda, call for candidates for the Executive Committee and proposal for the secretariat	EuroGeographics	22/08/2014
2	Organise the consultation process on the draft work program	FR, SE	12/09/2014
3	Present candidatures for the elections of the Executive Committee of UN-GGIM: Europe	All countries	08/09/2014
4	Send out final draft work program, Executive Committee candidate profiles and any other papers.	EuroGeographics	17/09/2014





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6. Annex Invitation letter to the side event



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8th July 2014

Ref: UN-GGIM: Europe 2014/001.LT

Dear Colleague,

I am writing to inform you about progress in establishing UN-GGIM: Europe.

1. The Preparatory Committee established by the acting UN Director of Statistics, Stefan Schweinfest, sent a report to the UN-GGIM Secretariat in New York on 8th May. This report summarises the reports prepared by the three European Working Groups and includes the final version of the Articles and Rules of Procedure for UN-GGIM: Europe. The report can be accessed through Annex A.
2. The 4th Session of the Committee of Experts on GGIM will be held in New York 6 – 8 August 2014. An informal side meeting has been arranged for representatives of European UN Member States on Tuesday 5th August commencing at 18.00 hrs. This meeting is expected to last 90 minutes; it will provide people attending with a summary of the progress made so far and an opportunity to discuss the arrangements for the 1st Plenary meeting of UN-GGIM: Europe. The draft agenda for the meeting on 5th August can be accessed through Annex A.
3. The 1st Plenary meeting of UN-GGIM: Europe will commence at 09.30 on 1st October at the Leograd Hotel and Conference Centre in Chisinau, Moldova. This is the same venue and the day after the EuroGeographics General Assembly. At this meeting an Executive Committee of 9 people will be elected, a proposal to provide a secretariat to UN-GGIM: Europe and a work plan will be approved. The draft agenda and registration details will be sent to you separately.
4. The draft of the work plan for UN-GGIM: Europe has been prepared by France and Sweden. The draft of the work plan can be accessed through Annex A. Please provide your comments on this to Francois.Chirre@ign.fr Jorgen.Hartnor@lm.se and dave.lovell@eurogeographics.org by 21st July.
5. You should have received an invitation from the UN to the 4th Session of the Committee of Experts on GGIM to be held in New York 6 – 8 August 2014. If you are attending please follow the instructions in the letter.
6. If you are in New York for the 4th Session of the Committee of Experts on GGIM you are recommended to arrange to meet with your country's permanent representative to the UN to brief them on the importance of UN-GGIM to your national activities.

Yours Faithfully,

Bengt Kjellson, Director General Lantmäteriet and Swedish Representative to UN-GGIM, on behalf of the Preparatory Committee for UN-GGIM: Europe.

As an interim arrangement EuroGeographics is providing support to the Preparatory Committee for UN-GGIM: Europe

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Annex A

1. The Preparatory Committee report is here:
<http://eurogeographics.org/sites/default/files/UN-GGIM-Europe-report%20to%20UN-GGIM4%20anex.docx.pdf>
2. The draft agenda for the informal side meeting of European UN Member States representatives on Tuesday 5th August is here:
<http://www.eurogeographics.org/sites/default/files/UN-GGIM-Europe%20Informal%20meeting%205%20Aug.pdf>
3. The draft of the work plan for UN-GGIM: Europe is here:
<http://www.eurogeographics.org/sites/default/files/UN-GGIM-Europe%20Draft%20Work%20Plan%20for%20consultation%20v1.docx>
Please provide your comments on this to Francois.Chirie@ign.fr and Jorgen.Hartnor@lm.se by 21st July.

If you reply to this letter please send your reply to David Lovell EuroGeographics Executive Director
dave.lovell@eurogeographics.org





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