

Interview Federal Police

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Remarks made during the presentation / general orientation of the study + general impression of Federal Police

- INSPIRE: be aware that the “Baseline Measurement” is not a “zero measurement” – many actions have already been undertaken in the light of the INSPIRE directive (2007). Remark: INSPIRE is focusing on environmental topics, our study has a broader focus + INSPIRE set a highly generalized framework, leading to specific actions in administrations – we aim to develop a general frame for the Belgian level (by taking into account also actions of the EU level).
- Workshops / study days: could be interesting to organize “certified” study days for civil servants.
- Recurrent focus on geobroker aspect
- Demotivated staff

Federal Police: user or producer?

Federal Police (FP) considers itself mainly as a user of maps and datasets with geospatial info. However, due to the fact that the datasets and maps they use are insufficient to comply with their work, they start to rework the maps or add other data on it. Therefore they can also be considered as a producer of data(sets) with a geospatial component (e.g. GRB of Information Flanders → FP redefines the address location of the maps).

Sharing of this new datasets/maps: yes (even for free), but as it is not the task of the Federal Police to redefine/rework the datasets, they don't want to take the responsibility for it (also because the data is not 100% correct). Mainly shares the maps within the federal police + with ASTRID (has its own police unit – the 101 unit, works together with the civil protection).

Geodatasets updates: impossible for the Federal Police to update the datasets themselves, therefore they would like to receive regular updates of other organizations that have geodata and the production of it as their core task. NGI: they underline that updates are not recurrent enough – “4 years for an update is too long” (even Google is doing it every 2 years)

Role of the NGI:

They are indeed an authority in the geo world – however, Federal Police (FP) remarks that the core products and activities is focused on topography and not on GPS, geo-processes and the newest technologies, methodologies and products within the geo sector. There are also others that can play a role, i.e. SADL, AGIV, UNamur, UGent.

Importance of a geobroker

FP underlines the importance of a geobroker – whereby the following activities are crucial:

- Creation of a common structure for the exchange of data
- Free data
- ING as geobroker
- Geobroker as a data integrator: interoperability, standards & quality, open data etc.

Why? There are a number of recurring problems:

- Insufficient financial means
- No “basis”-maps → i.e. there is not a single map available that can be labelled as an authentic source and/or maps often claim to have the authentic element but are using different standards (especially problematic between the regions)
- Strong differences between the reality on the ground and the maps

- Historical-technical link: datasets are built in a particular way → Federal Police works within a time range of 30 years (long for ICT, short for criminality / police work) + changing system A (e.g. application) means changing a whole number of applications that are built on system A (or the datasets linked to system A).
- Geobroker can reduce the workload of the Federal Police: refocus on essential task + platform to exchange geodata with other partners.

Other point linked to concept of geobroker:

- Federal Police makes – for security reasons – use of an isolated network, so no link to the Federal Service Bus. Therefore, a geobroker is highly welcome as well.
- Geosoftware: Federal Police would like to have a centralized point to buy software (similar for hardware).

Difficulties encountered during projects / general functioning

- Budgets: foreseen for projects, however, always on the short term – 1 year → makes it difficult to create a long-term vision
- Priorities: datasets & e-services are often invisible in the beginning (the public e-service is just the end point in itself) → makes it less of a priority.
- “the system” (the organization, structures & processes) is very slow (similar remark is made by the State Archives on the functioning of the FPS Finance).

Importance of culture

Federal & local level:

The culture at the federal level and within the local police is often not ideal: there is no tangible awareness raising on the importance of undertaking correct registrations of facts that take place on the ground.

= the sense of responsibility is missing.

- Shows that there is a difficult relation between the federal level and the regional level within the Police. The Federal Police has no hierarchy over the Local Police, and is therefore not able to force them into a certain direction.
- E.g. relation with Local Police of Antwerp: very strong team – lot of financial possibilities – often earlier in the development of projects/services. This leads to discrepancies and incompatibility when systems are developed (as the Federal level is often slower than the Local Antwerp team, but Federal has to take into account existing systems, Antwerp has less of this problems).

Role of personalities? → unclear, but expected to have an impact.

Within the administration (incl. various levels):

- no real contacts between the various actors involved in the use of geospatial data → therefore a general committee that brings together the people working on and with geospatial data (and e-services) would already be highly useful. (e.g. Follow-up Committee can be a first step).
- Exchanging data happens often at a lower level, this goes very good and quick – however, often it happens in a grey zone. When the consent of the higher levels is necessary then it can take months/years before the necessary agreements are made.