

An interview with the CLGE President Jean-Yves Pirlot

Council of European Geodetic

This is the first contribution from the CLGE for GeoInformatics. As an introduction to the readers of GeoInformatics, CLGE President Jean-Yves Pirlot explains in detail what the organization is all about, such as its members and main activities.

By the editors



The CLGE Executive Board, from left to right: Pierre Bibollet (FR, Vice President), Leive Bjarne Mjøs (NO, Vice President), Dieter Seitz (DE, Treasurer), Rudolf Kolbe (AT, Vice President), Jean-Yves Pirlot (BE, President), Michelle Camilleri (MT, Secretary General).
Not on the picture Danko Markovinovic (HR, Vice President for GI).

GeoInformatics: What's the aim of the Council of European Geodetic Surveyors?

Jean-Yves Pirlot: In a one-liner, CLGE is the leading surveyors association in Europe!

GI: ... moreover?

Pirlot: CLGE is the Council of European Geodetic Surveyors. The acronym stems from the French name Comité de Liaison des Géomètres Européens. In a broad sense, it represents the interests of the European Surveyor on the whole continent. This means that our Council promotes the profession in the European Union as well as in the surrounding Council of Europe countries. Surveying includes Cadastral Surveying

which provides security to land and property title and thus underlies the economic foundation of developed societies. Moreover, Geospatial Information is now ubiquitous in our lives and the surveyor plays a fundamental role in this field. Both activities are strongly related because a well-managed cadaster is an ideal fundament for national Geo Data Infrastructures.

Our tasks in property delimitation and Geoinformation management are strongly related because the cadaster is an ideal fundament for Geo Data Infrastructures.

The individual surveyors are the final and most important beneficiaries of CLGE's activ-

ities. However, the Council also pursues more general aims, such as the sustainable development of European society and the public and individual interests of European Citizens.

It is important to note that we are representing the profession as a whole. This means that we have delegates from the private, the public and the academic sectors. For the time being, we are introducing a representation of the youngsters as well.

GI: When and why was CLGE founded?

Pirlot: About 50 years ago, it became clear that the European countries, united within the worldwide organization FIG,

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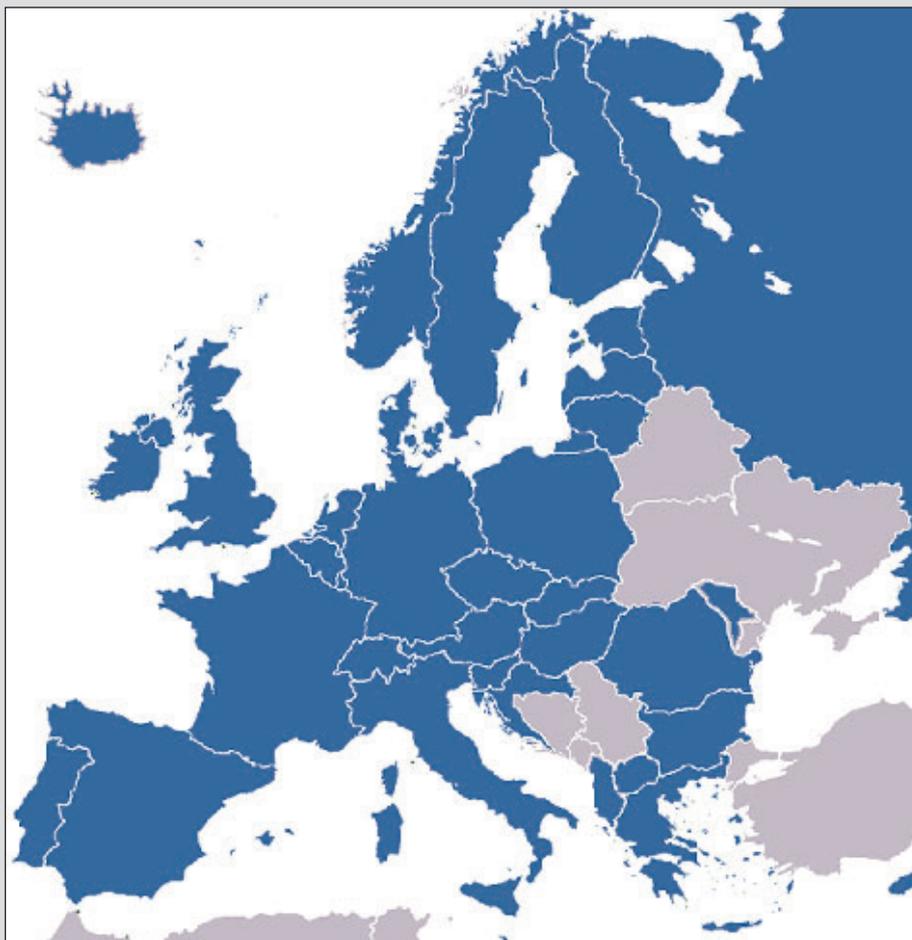
needed a representational body to interact with the then young European institutions. Official history reports a first meeting in 1972, during the FIG congress held in Wiesbaden, Germany. However, older members of our association have mentioned prior meetings, as early as 1962. We hope that this issue will be solved before our next European Conference, in Hanover on October 11th, 2012, since our 50th anniversary will of course deserve special attention.

GI: Which countries are member of CLGE?

Pirlot: CLGE is still growing. As shown on the map (figure 1), we are represented in 35 countries. Amongst them we have the 27 EU member states as well as 8 Council of Europe countries. In each country we ask our member organizations to create a National Liaison Group. This group is represented by two delegates in our General Assembly, sharing one single vote. This approach promotes national cooperation.

GI: How is it possible to become a member of CLGE and how are you recruiting new members?

Pirlot: Actually, the National Liaison Groups (NLG) are not yet completely built in all our



member countries. This process is still ongoing. It means that candidate associations can always contact existing members of a given NLG and start negotiations to join it. CLGE normally does not interfere in these discussions unless asked to do so by both parties. Not so long ago, the French Association for Topography started talks with our historic member OGE (Ordre des Géomètres-Experts

français). I am confident that they will join the French NLG soon. Others could follow.

By requiring the constitution of National Liaison Groups, we foster the local cooperation amongst surveying associations. And it works!

We are not really recruiting actively. All the Council of Europe members are welcome. It suffices that the candidate associations represent the majority of the profession within their country and engage themselves to follow the principles of CLGE. Once accepted they have to build a National Liaison Group, together with the sister organizations in their country.

European Surveyor, regardless where you are on March 5th, 2012, please celebrate your profession! March 5th, 2012, 500 years Mercator, the First Day of the European Surveyor and Geoinformation.

GI: What are your main activities?

As we have limited means, we can only invest in important activities. However, in this article it is not possible to list them all. We will seize the opportunity given by our cooperation with your magazine to describe our activities in more detail in the coming 15 issues. However, we can of course synthesize our engagement by announcing our main goals.

In a few words CLGE wants to:

- take part in the legislative process governing the exercise of the Surveying Profession at the European and national levels;
- build a professional image of the European Surveyor, recognized by national governments as well as the EU;
- motivate young surveyors to become active within their national associations and hence CLGE (and urge young people to join our profession, of course);
- make sure that the CLGE members are satisfied with our performance.

Therefore, we absolutely need to raise our profile and to appear on the radar of the European politicians and the broader public.

CLGE has to raise its profile if we want the profession to appear on the radar of the politicians and the broader public!

And here we have to highlight one single action that's planned for March 5th, 2012; yes, the first Day of the European Surveyor. Our General Assembly has asked us to organize this event on the very day on which our famous predecessor Mercator was born, 500 years ago, in what's now called Belgium.

Together with some National Mapping and Cadastral Agencies our CLGE delegates and their organizations will arrange special events all over Europe, to honour this day. Moreover, CLGE will organize a specific celebration in Brussels, inviting delegations from every European country. If you are Surveyor and interested in joining the event, do not hesitate to contact us on Geoinformatics@clge.eu (please follow the news on www.clge.eu for an updated programme). A few places are available for Geoinformatics readers.

In the upcoming issues of this magazine, we will present several other initiatives in more detail. We will, for instance, explain our involvement in the modernization of the European Directive on the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications, advertise our next European Con-

ference to be held during INTERGEO 2012 in Hanover, together with our European Students Meeting and the first CLGE Students Contest. We will also give more details on the Dynamic Professional Knowledge Base we are planning to build.

GI: What is the difference between CLGE and other international associations, for instance FIG?

Jyp: We see CLGE as a part of FIG. There is no competition at all. On the contrary, we are working hand in hand in a very complementary way. Whilst FIG concentrates on the work of high level professional and technical commissions, CLGE is more active in the field of European professional politics. This is an absolute must, since the EU is really shaping the way in which we will perform our duties tomorrow.

As a matter of fact, a lot of our delegates are active in CLGE and FIG as well. As we still have increasing participation rates at our General Assemblies and Conferences, we understand that CLGE proposes a significant added value for our member associations.

FIG and CLGE are working hand in hand in a very complementary way. The relevance of CLGE as a regional partner within the FIG could and should grow in the coming years.

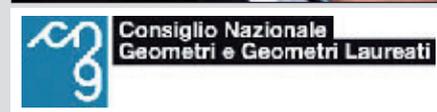
During our Tallinn General Assembly in September 2011, we started some discussions about the relevance of CLGE within FIG. I feel that our involvement as a regional partner could and should grow in the coming years.

On the European level there is another much smaller organization called EGoS (European Group of Surveyors). We are preparing a memorandum of understanding to make sure that we work in the same direction. For the time being this already happens but in an informal way.

Last but not least I would like to mention an important sister organisation EuroGeographics. This international non-profit association unites the National Mapping and Cadastral Agencies of the European Continent. Needless to say it employs a lot of surveyors and thus is our natural ally in many circumstances. We have co-written two major studies about professional

requirements and the impact of the European regulations, available on www.clge.eu. Both our associations are based in the House of the European Surveyor and Geoinformation, in Brussels. This helps!

The 3rd International and



In May 2011, Ph.D. Danko Markovinović was appointed CLGE Vice President for Geodesy and Geoinformation. In the next issue of Geoinformatics he will take questions about CLGE's policy in this specific field.

Professional Training Course for Young Surveyors

Under the Auspices of CLGE, the 3rd International and Professional Training Course for Young Surveyors (< 35 years) was held in Athens between 3rd and 14th of October, 2011. The training course was a well-prepared event, organized and sponsored by the **Consiglio Nazionale Geometri e Geometri Laureati** (the National Association of Italian Surveyors) and **Geoweb** (the company which provides all information about the Cadaster to Italian surveyors), in collaboration with HARSE (the Hellenic Association of Rural and Surveying Engineers). All participants, young surveyors, lecturers and local organizers expressed their thanks and appreciation to Fausto Savolid, President of CNG e GL and Piero Panunzi, President of Geoweb for this unique initiative. They also expressed a wish to see this become a regularly organized event.

In one of the next issues of Geoinformatics we will come back to the initiative and concentrate on its future.

Read the full opening speech of the CLGE president on www.clge.eu (google "Piriot Athens" on the site search engine).

