

International Networking in GI Science Education

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The need for international cooperation

Geographic information (GI) is on the way to become a real business. This evokes the need for highly qualified personnel, in producing companies as well as in research. Universities are building blocks of this business: Their outputs are students, PhD, and professors doing research, and working as future employees and leaders in the GI market. On their capabilities depends the further growth of the GI market, and, in return, the further demand for institutes for geoinformatics.

GI is an international business. Many initiatives show the need and the success of an international cooperation in business and research, e.g., OpenGIS Consortium, Global Spatial Data Infrastructure (GSDI), Geographical Information Systems International Group (GISIG), and Association Geographic Information Laboratories Europe (AGILE).

The successful introduction of the curriculum in „Geoinformatics“ at the University of Münster, as well as similar programs at other universities, suggest an institutionalized exchange program in education.

There is a need for a bottom-up approach of a practical cooperation of institutes for geoinformatics. Only through an exchange of information, contents, students, and teachers, education can match international quality standards. Internationalization targets sustainable networking for the purposes of

- More efficient use of resources
- Quality assurance in GI education
- Improved qualifications of university graduates.

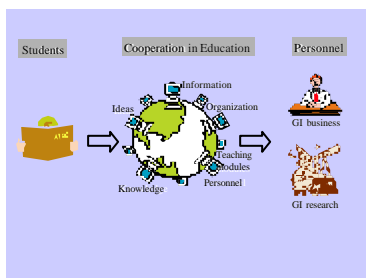
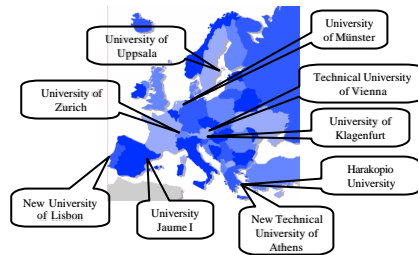


Fig. 1: The GI market needs education

The ifgi networks



eduGI.net

In October, 2001, ifgi initiated **eduGI.net** (see www.eduGI.net). The network of nine European partners cooperates in

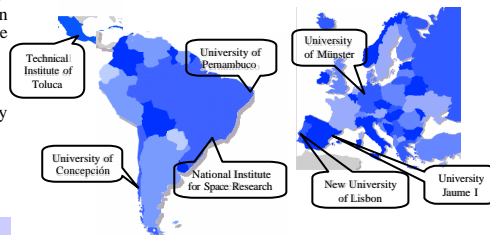
- Students mobility
- Teachers mobility
- Summer schools
- Curricula/ECTS
- Exchange of teaching units
- Funding opportunities
- Extending cooperation.



A highlight in 2002 was the first eduGI.net summer school, hosted by ifgi. Fifteen students of nine countries and seven teachers of five countries attended the very well approved event.



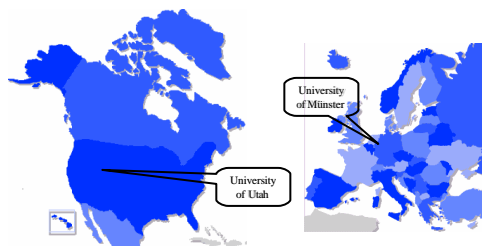
Fig. 2: Summer school participants, Muenster, 2002



eduGILA

The extension of cooperation has been successful within the EC ALFA program. Three eduGI.net partners and four Latin-American partners will start their cooperation in July, 2003. **eduGILA** will be a one-year project containing mobility measures, summer school, curriculum harmonization, and exchange of teaching units.

In May, 2003, ifgi successfully finished an **ISAP** project, funded by the DAAD (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst). The project targeted the bilateral cooperation of University of Utah and ifgi. The kick-off project executed the exchange of three students and three faculties. Personal contacts and discussion laid the organizational basis for a sustainable cooperation in education. In addition, it gave impact to an intense cooperation in research by common papers, a foreseen workshop, and research faculty exchange.



ISAP