

Geospatial Information in Response to Covid-19 Pandemic – Serbian Experience

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SUMMARY

The world today faces many complex challenges, including the adaptation and mitigation of climate change; rapid urbanization; increased demand for natural resources; growing food, water and energy insecurity; resolution of violent conflicts, increased natural disasters and the recent covid-19 pandemic.

The use of spatial data is a key element for addressing these challenges. Investments in geospatial technologies can address various activities, including sustainability programs around land, water, food, natural resources as well as other aspects including National Security, Disaster Response and Resiliency, Infrastructure development and was critical in response to the global covid-19 pandemic. The global covid-19 crises, showed that the policies and laws should go in parallel with the increased use of technologies, which could provide information when and where most is needed and provide evidence for monitoring the effects of the human interventions, providing opportunities to model the possible risks zones and to help decision makers to take preventive measures, both in the areas of health, social protection and deciding on the possible support to economy, including agriculture, food production and supply of goods for first aid.

In Serbia, Republic Geodetic Authority (RGA) is a National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) coordinator and INSPIRE National Contact Point. RGA is a special governmental organization, which performs state survey, maintenance of real estate cadastre and management of geospatial data at the national level. Thanks to the NSDI development during the last 3 years, Republic of Serbia and Republic Geodetic Authority managed to respond quickly to the growing need for information from the beginning of COVID 19 pandemic. The RGA and Geospatial Platform – GeoSerbia

became an important part of the whole information and decision making process in Serbia during the pandemic.

This article presents the digital transformation process of RGZ, existing Geospatial platforms and innovative technologies, the supporting legal framework, organisational set up and the process of collecting new and update existing datasets and services at the time of the start of covid-19 pandemic (early 2020); how those have been used during the pandemic and the new services developed to support the decision making process during the pandemic; lessons learned and measures taken to eliminate existing barriers and ongoing development of a National Risk Register, which is based on the existing Geospatial platform (GeoSerbia) and will make possible to plan the national and individual responses to any disaster events in real time.

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