

# **Articles of the Europe Region of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM: Europe)**

## **Title 1: Recitals, Background and Context.**

Whereas:

- (1) The United Nations Initiative on Global Geospatial Information<sup>1</sup> Management (UN-GGIM) welcomes regional committees as an efficient way to make progress and provide useful input to the global UN-GGIM process.
- (2) The Europe Region of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM: Europe) will comprise representatives of the European UN Member States.
- (3) UN-GGIM: Europe shall take into account the global agenda and that of other UN-GGIM regional committees.
- (4) For European Union Member States a raft of laws exist and programmes are being developed which impact upon public authorities responsible for geospatial and statistical information e.g. INSPIRE, the Re-use of Public Sector Information, SEIS, and Copernicus.
- (5) EFTA countries have legalized many laws and programmes of the EU and some non-EU member states have found the EU legal frameworks for geospatial information to be good models and follow them on a voluntary basis. Hence in practical terms, working under UN-GGIM: Europe will be a continuation and extension of existing practice.
- (6) European UN Member States and the UN-GGIM Secretariat agree that the best way to build UN-GGIM: Europe is to fully respect and use existing structures, in order to avoid duplication of effort, work and costs, and to maximise synergies.
- (7) There is a long standing tradition in Europe of cooperation on geospatial and for statistical information through EuroGeographics, the European Statistical System, other bodies and with many parts of the European Institutions.
- (8) Formal contact points for the UN are the Ministries of Foreign Affairs; nonetheless effective communications will be required at an expert level.

## **Title 2 Form, Name Purpose and Activities of the Committee**

### **Article 1 - Form and Name**

1.1 The Committee shall be called the Europe Regional Committee of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, hereinafter called UN-GGIM: Europe.

1.2 UN-GGIM: Europe does not have separate legal personality.

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<sup>1</sup> In the context of UN-GGIM Europe 'Geospatial' information is taken to mean: 'geographic information and any data which has an explicitly geographic component including tabular data and statistical information associated with locations.'

1.3. UN-GGIM: Europe shall operate within the scope of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management. UN-GGIM aims at playing a leading role in setting the agenda for the development of global geospatial information and promoting its use to address key global challenges. It provides a forum for liaison and coordination among UN Member States and between UN Member States and international organizations.

## **Article 2 - Purpose and Activities**

2.1. UN-GGIM: Europe shall identify European issues relevant to geospatial information management and recommend necessary actions on them for the furtherance of the discussions in UN-GGIM so that the economic, social and environmental benefits of European geospatial information are maximized.

2.2. While fully respecting existing European as well as national frameworks and capabilities, in the context of European geospatial information management, UN-GGIM: Europe shall aim to the following objectives. To:

- encourage implementation in Europe of the recommendations of UN-GGIM particularly those aimed at disaster management and the support of sustainable development;
- promote an understanding of the need for and use of geospatial information and the importance of effective management of it;
- share experiences and best practice in geospatial information management, for example with INSPIRE, and consult on matters of common interest;
- provide guidance on the institutional framework which defines the policy, legislative, financial and administrative arrangements for building, maintaining, accessing, applying standards and achieving geospatial interoperability at local, regional and global level;
- support capacity building, donor funding and other measures, for the development of geospatial information and spatial data infrastructure development in Europe;
- provide strategic leadership and vision on the management and development of geospatial information strategy and policies within Europe including national location strategies and a sustainable European Location Strategy;
- cooperate in the development of a European geospatial information infrastructure which supports the integration of statistics and avoids duplication of cost, effort and data;
- establish links with other relevant United Nations programmes and international bodies and cooperate with international scientific and professional organizations and institutions.

## **Title 3: Membership**

### **Article 3 –Members**

3.1 Membership of UN-GGIM: Europe is open to UN Member States in Europe. Each European UN Member State shall nominate a single expert representative. A number of

additional persons may be nominated by the Representative as experts to attend meetings of UN-GGIM: Europe.

3.2 Members can participate in all the activities of UN-GGIM: Europe, can be elected to the Executive Committee and vote in the plenary meeting of UN GGIM Europe.

3.3 Observers may be admitted to meetings and contribute to the work of UN-GGIM: Europe but will not be members.

3.4 At commencement the European Commission shall be an Observer of UN-GGIM: Europe. Further Observers will be considered from other European Institutions, professional, research and academic organizations or associations, which have an interest in geospatial or statistical information management.

3.5 Observers can only participate in the activities of UN-GGIM: Europe, with the approval of the Plenary meeting of UN-GGIM: Europe and on the occasion of a specific invitation from the Chair or their deputy.

#### **Article 4 – Rights and Obligations of the Members**

4.1 Each member shall be represented by a ‘head of delegation’ who shall be responsible for consulting with, and representing, relevant bodies in their country. A number of additional persons may be nominated by this representative as experts to attend meetings of the Committee.

4.2 Members shall endeavour to attend UN-GGIM: Europe plenary meetings and take actions necessary and appropriate to develop and promote the aims of UN-GGIM: Europe and may, with the approval of the Chair, represent UN-GGIM: Europe in specific functions or at events.

4.3 Each member shall adhere to the Articles of UN-GGIM: Europe and its Rules of Procedure and work to their normal high professional standards in an open and transparent manner and in full cooperation with the other members.

4.4 Each member participating in UN-GGIM: Europe shall have one vote. With the exception of changes to these articles, dissolution of UN-GGIM: Europe and Rule 15, decisions of UN-GGIM: Europe shall be taken by a majority of the Representatives present and voting.

4.5 Each member should consider the recommendations from UN-GGIM: Europe within the remit of, and as implemented in, the plenary meeting. The members will individually decide on implementation of the recommendations, dependent on circumstances such as a member’s national rules, laws or administrative practices. If their national rules, laws and administrative practices permit, the members belonging to the European Union should consider promoting the recommendations from UN-GGIM: Europe within the institutions of Europe.

#### **Title 4: Bodies of UN-GGIM: Europe: Executive Committee and Secretariat**

##### **Article 5 - Executive Committee**

5.1 UN-GGIM: Europe shall be managed by an Executive Committee which shall have full powers to carry out the objectives of the UN-GGIM: Europe members in that respect.

5.2 The Executive Committee comprises nine persons including a Chair and Vice Chair.

5.3 The Chair, Vice Chair and Executive Committee members shall be elected, by simple majority, for a three year term at a Plenary meeting of UN-GGIM: Europe.

5.4 The Chair or Vice Chair, depending on availability, will chair UN-GGIM: Europe meetings. During meetings their primary responsibility is to the role of chair. To ensure that they are able to remain impartial, but for their European UN Member State to still vote, they may designate someone else from their national delegation to participate and vote in plenary meetings in their place.

5.5 The Executive Committee shall:

- Plan and coordinate a programme of work which the members agree is needed to meet the objectives of UN-GGIM: Europe;
- Plan and manage the activities that UN-GGIM: Europe undertakes for UN-GGIM in consultation with the UN-GGIM Secretariat;
- Manage the continuing administrative affairs of UN-GGIM: Europe;
- Make recommendations to UN-GGIM: Europe on objectives, activities and a work programme;
- Prepare and submit reports on activities of UN-GGIM: Europe to the Plenary meeting, UN-GGIM secretariat, the Committee of Experts on UN-GGIM and relevant international bodies;
- Represent the interests of Europe in the world's geospatial information management community;
- Promote UN-GGIM guidelines to the members of UN-GGIM: Europe;
- Take opportunities to give presentations to related bodies at conferences and other relevant events;
- Examine and approve arrangements for all the meetings organized or sponsored in the name of UN-GGIM: Europe.

5.6 The Executive Committee shall meet as often as necessary and at least once a year. The date and place shall be determined by the Chair. Meetings may be virtual in nature. A majority of the Executive Committee must attend to form a quorum.

5.7 Depending on the meeting agenda the Chair may, at their discretion, invite third parties such as Observers or topic experts to an Executive Committee meeting or appropriate part of it.

5.8 The Executive Committee shall be assisted to carry out its function by a Secretariat.

## **Article 6 – Secretariat**

6.1 A member of UN-GGIM: Europe shall be granted responsibility for providing a secretariat to UN-GGIM: Europe by a majority vote of the members at a Plenary meeting of UN-GGIM: Europe.

6.2 The responsibility for providing the secretariat shall not be tied to the position of Executive Committee membership.

6.3 The Secretariat shall be responsible for secretarial, clerical, and administrative duties, maintaining records etc. including arranging meetings, taking minutes and collecting and circulating documents to support the effective and smooth operation of UN-GGIM: Europe.

6.4 A member offering to fulfil the role of secretariat shall provide UN-GGIM: Europe members with a proposal detailing how the service will be provided and its costs paid for.

6.5 The secretariat shall report to the Executive Committee as the Committee shall require.

## **Title 5: Plenary Meetings**

### **Article 7 - Timing, format, organization and key elements of the meeting**

7.1 The Plenary meeting of UN-GGIM: Europe shall be convened at a time and place convenient to the members. A Plenary meeting will normally be held each calendar year.

7.2 The Chair of the Executive Committee of UN-GGIM: Europe, or if not available the Vice Chair, chairs the meeting.

7.3 The Executive Committee, along with the member from the host European UN Member State, will be responsible for organizing the Plenary meeting, including the agenda and identification of any invited speakers. The UN-GGIM secretariat may provide administrative support, such as issuing invitations and publication of proceedings.

7.4 Key elements of the Plenary meeting include:

- Receiving reports from:
  - UN-GGIM: Europe members;
  - the Committee of Experts on UN-GGIM;
  - other UN-GGIM Regional bodies;
  - the Executive Committee on activities since the previous meeting;
- Considering proposals for future work by UN-GGIM: Europe;
- Electing members of the Executive Committee and the Chair and Vice Chair;
- Voting on an annual work plan and proposals:
  - for amendment of the Articles and Rules of Procedure;
  - for providing a secretariat to UN-GGIM: Europe.
  - to grant Observer status for organisations not representing a European UN Member State;

### **Article 8 - Working Groups**

8.1 Working Groups may be established by the Executive Committee to meet specific objectives of UN-GGIM: Europe.

8.2 Each Working Group shall, where possible, be chaired by a member of the Executive Committee.

8.3 Working Groups shall report to the Executive Committee on their activities, together with recommendations for consideration by UN-GGIM: Europe.

8.4 Working Group Chairs are able to appoint coordinators for key activities within their work programme and these coordinators will report to the Working Group Chair.

8.5 Procedures covering the day to day running of the Working Groups will be set out from time to time by the Executive Committee of UN-GGIM: Europe.

## **Title 6: Financing, Funds and Expenses**

### **Article 9 - Costs**

9.1 Delegations and other representatives shall bear all of their own costs for participating in all activities of UN-GGIM.

9.2 Expenses for arranging UN-GGIM: Europe Plenary, Executive Committee and Working Group meetings shall be borne by the host European UN Member State where the meeting is held, except where a financial contribution is approved by the UN-GGIM: Europe Plenary meeting.

9.3 Arrangements for meeting the costs of the administration of UN-GGIM: Europe shall be approved by a Plenary meeting of UN-GGIM: Europe on the basis of a proposal, or proposals, made by one or more member.

9.4 The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the allocation of all and any funds of UN-GGIM: Europe and its Working Groups.

## **Title 7: Supplementary**

### **Article 10 - Revision of the Articles**

10.1 The Articles may only be amended at a UN-GGIM: Europe Plenary meeting by a two-thirds majority of the European UN Member States present.

### **Article 11 - Dissolution of UN-GGIM: Europe**

11.1 UN-GGIM: Europe may be dissolved by a two-thirds majority of the European UN Member States present at a UN-GGIM: Europe Plenary meeting.

11.2 In the event of dissolution of UN-GGIM: Europe, any funds remaining after settlement of liabilities of UN-GGIM: Europe will be transferred to the European UN Member States in such manner and amount as may be approved by the members.

### **Article 12 - Effective Date of Articles**

12.1 The Articles shall take effect from the date they are approved by a two-thirds majority of the European UN Member States present at a UN-GGIM: Europe Plenary meeting.