

thinkWhere Creates Map Portal for Open European Geographic Data Services



thinkWhere is developing an online mapping portal to improve access to official European geospatial open data. Working with EuroGeographics, as part of the Open European Location Services (Open ELS) project, thinkWhere will create, maintain and support a user interface giving registered users access to open data from public authorities.

“thinkWhere has a proven track record within the not-for-profit sector having worked alongside organizations such as the Humanitarian OpenStreetMap team and People In Need, and were a natural fit as technical lead on this element of the project,” said Mick Cory, secretary general and executive director, EuroGeographics.

thinkWhere will use metadata provided by Europe’s national mapping agencies, survey organizations and government land registries to enable users to search, discover, acquire and licence open data and services.

The Open ELS project follows the commonly used web services architecture ‘publish-find-bind’ with the work by thinkWhere forming the ‘find and bind’ element. Information from service and data providers, under six web map and web feature themes (EuroGlobalMap / Regional Gazetteer / Open Cadastral / Addresses / Building / Transport), will be used to create a catalogue of published data and services. This information will be used, together with existing European Location Services technical components and open source technologies, to develop the user interface.

Co-financed by the European Union Connecting Europe Facility, the Open ELS project aims to maximise the use of authoritative geospatial information by providing certainty about what is free, what is charged for and under what terms and conditions. It is hoped the project will realise benefits of open geospatial information from official national sources by making it easy to find, access and re-use and recognises the contribution of public authorities responsible for mapping, cadastre and land registries in delivering user-focused open data for European Location Services.