
GI Learner: creating a learning line on geospatial thinking in education

Luc Zwartjes*¹

¹Ghent University Geography Department – Campus Sterre S8, Krijgslaan 281 9000 Gent, Belgium

Abstract

GI Learner is a three years Erasmus+ KA2 strategic partnership project, aiming at integrating geospatial literacy, geospatial thinking and GIScience into schools. Although it is seen as one of the most important sectors in the economy it is seldom really taught in schools.

Research has proven that although the software and datasets and model lessons are available, teacher don't make the step willingly. The only way is to 'institutionalize' it in the curriculum. Using the concept of a learning line the consortium started this schoolyear the project determining the content and outlook of these learning lines. In different phases testgroups in different schools will work with the material developed.

Bednarz & Van Der Schee made three recommendations for the successful introduction and integration of GIScience in schools. These were to:

- address key internal issues related to GIS implementation
- use a community of learners' approach and
- institutionalize GIScience into curricula.

In terms of the first two recommendations considerable progress has already been made, but the institutionalization of geo-technology and geo-media into curricula still remains a goal in almost all countries.

GI Learner aims to respond to this by the development of a GIScience learning line for secondary schools, so that integration of spatial thinking can take place. This implies translating the spatial and other competences, taking into account age and capabilities of students, into real learning objectives that will increase spatial thinking education activities and help produce the workforce we need now and for the future and geospatially literate citizens.

All of this will help us to create a learning line showing the importance of geospatial smart thinking.

The GI Learner project (<http://www.gilearner.eu>) will develop teaching and learning material for this aim, as well as an evaluation on learning outcomes of the students who use these materials.

The final product will be the full developed learning lines combined with ready-to-use material for the classroom.

*Speaker

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