



# A nightmare come true: a day in a room full of lawyers



A report from the Spatialist workshop on  
legal aspects of geographic data & SDI

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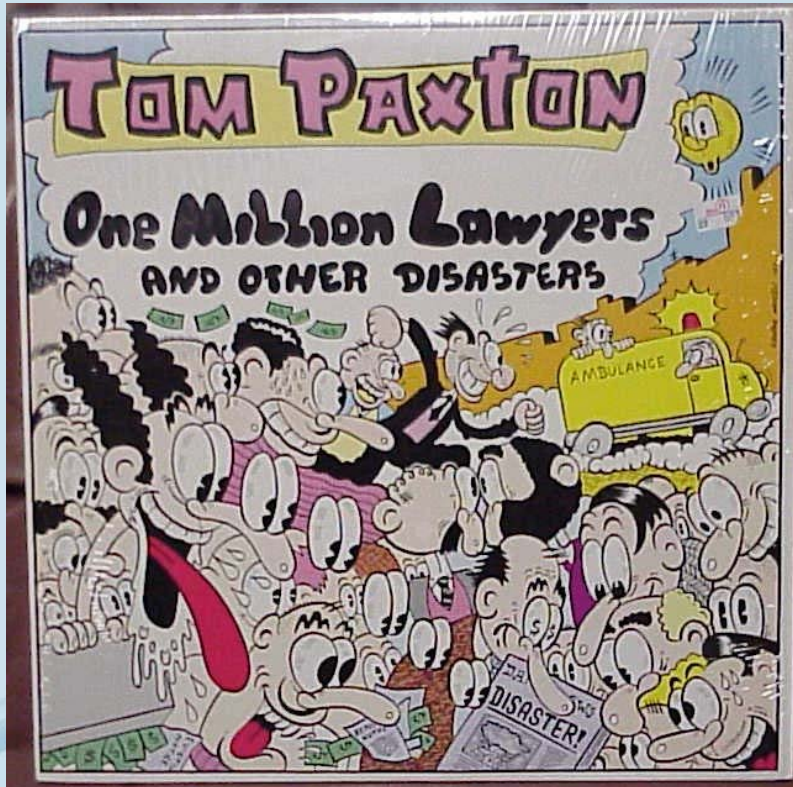
# The Spatialist project

- “Spatial Data Infrastructure and Public Sector Innovation”
- 4 year interdisciplinary research project
- Funded by the Flemish Institute for Science and Technology



What are the technological, legal, economic, sociological and public administrative requirements to further develop a spatial data infrastructure, consistent with international standards, that is efficient, effective, flexible, and feasible?

# The workshop



Oh, a suffering world cries for mercy.

As far as the eye can see,  
Lawyers around every bend in the road.

Lawyers in every tree.

Lawyers in restaurants.

Lawyers in clubs.

Lawyers behind every door.

...

In ten years we're gonna have one million lawyers.

How much can a poor nation stand?

# The day of the workshop

- Some numbers
  - 19 March 2010, Leuven
  - 1 day
  - 24 people
  - 4 sessions
    - Privacy and security
    - Intellectual property rights
    - The role of the public and the private sector
    - Research agenda for the future
  - 2 presentations in each session: one from the GI-sector, one from the legal theme



# The results of the workshop

- Privacy and security
  - Different legal paradigms and many cultural differences
    - More emphasis on ethics than rules?
  - Problematic concepts in existing legislation
    - Killing good initiatives from public bodies?
  - Compliance with privacy legislation is impossible in practice
  - Legal and policy community is falling behind on technology



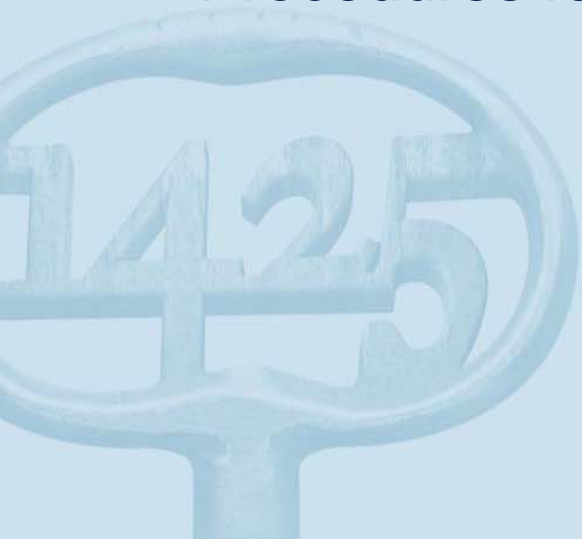
# The results of the workshop (2)

- Intellectual property rights
  - Changes in effect of IPR in digital society
    - Data is free
    - Stricter copyright rules
  - Need global solutions
  - Access and harmonised licensing conditions
    - Good initiatives, but a long way to go
  - ‘Just start sharing in order to develop the law’



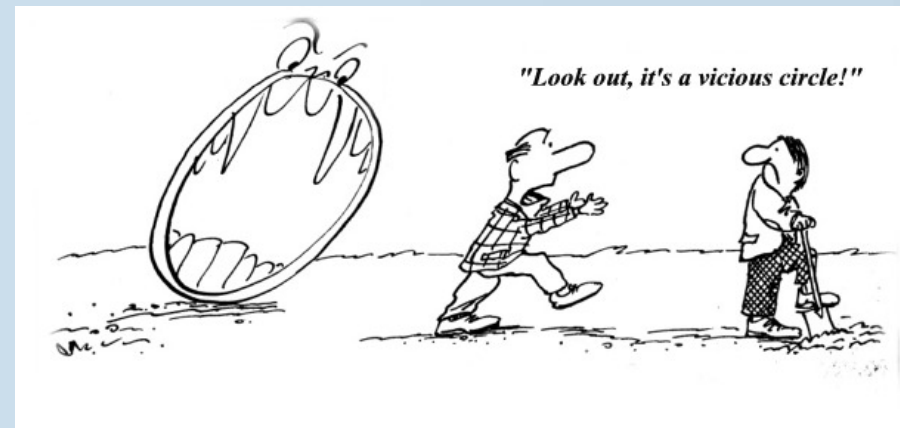
# The results of the workshop (3)

- Competition and public-private relationship
  - Defining the public task
    - Work in progress
    - Politically attractive?
  - Is spatial data unique?
  - Cooperation: Discussion should not be polarised
  - Procedures rather than definitions?



# The results of the workshop (4)

- Priorities for the future
  - Same priorities as ten years ago?
  - Coherence between different legal initiatives
  - ‘Global market’ – getting data out there
  - Legal issues are not separate issues
    - But they are still legal issues...
    - A role for lawyers in SDI community



# Follow-up (1)



Next workshop: 18 March 2011

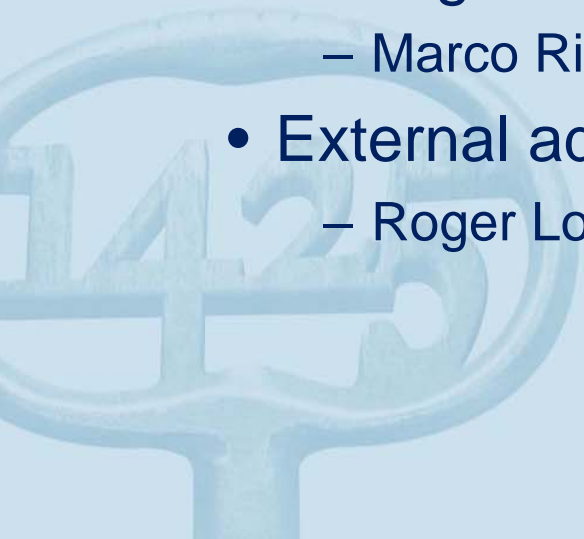
# Follow-up (2)

- OneGeology-Europe project
  - Practical, incremental approach
  - Another lawyer coming your way...



# Follow-up (3)

- LAPSI project
  - Legal aspects of public sector information
  - Thematic Network
    - Led by Politecnico di Torino
    - 20 partners
    - Management committee
      - Marco Ricolfi, Mireille van Eechoud, Katleen Janssen
    - External advisory board
      - Roger Longhorn, Herbert Burkert, Paul Uhler



# Follow-up (4)

- LAPSI project
  - Seminars, primers and conferences
  - 6 themes
    - IPR & Competition
    - Privacy
    - Implementation and deployment issues
    - Licensing
    - PSI and cultural content
    - Constitutional rights, environmental perspectives



# Follow-up (5)

- LAPSI project
  - Objective: recommendations to the Commission on the PSI directive
    - Input for the review
    - Concrete changes to the directive
  - Involvement of stakeholders is crucial!



# Thank you!

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