



## **Ifigenia Vardakosta<sup>1,2</sup> Sarantos Kapidakis<sup>1</sup>**

*1Laboratory on Digital Libraries and Electronic Publishing  
Department of Archive, Library and Museum Sciences,  
Faculty of Information Science and Informatics  
Ionian University, Corfu, Greece,  
{ifigenia, sarantos} [@ionio.gr](mailto:ifigenia@ionio.gr)*

*2Harokopio University. Library and Information Centre  
Kallithea, Athens, Greece,  
[ifigenia@hua.gr](mailto:ifigenia@hua.gr)*

# **Strategic considerations for geospatial collection development from Greek Academic Libraries in an open access era: GIS users point of view**

# Presentation Overview



- **Motivation for research**
- **Objectives of the overall research**
- **Phase I: GIS implementation in Greece**
- **Phase II: Libraries and Geographic Information**
- **Phase III: GIS users point of view for Greek Libraries**
- **Conclusions**
- **Suggestions**

# Motivation for research



- The need for geospatial information in conjunction with the absence of Greek librarianship literature
- GIS users have not been approached in Greek library environment

# Objectives of the overall research



- Detect the current library environment regarding the geographic information
- Determine the GIS users perceptions for the capabilities that Greek libraries provide for their educational/research needs in geographical information

## Phase I :

# What do experts sustain about GIS implementation in Greece?

(1)



## Methodology

*Research Method*: focus group    *Size*: 4 experts

*Data Collection*: interview - questionnaire

(13 conditional sections, 27 questions) based on:

- ▶ surveys that were investigating the implementation of GIS in academic libraries

(Kinikin and Hench 2005 ; Kinikin and Hench, 2005a ; Gabaldon and Reppinger 2006)

- ▶ Australia's National Library Position associated with GIS implementation (O'Connor 1996)

- ▶ American Research Library GIS Literacy's Project guidelines (ARL, 1999).

- ▶ the strong recommendations of other librarians

(French, 2001 ; Sweetkind-Singer and Williams 2001 ; Houser 2006 ; Todd 2008)



### Results

Researchers and scholars in Greece are familiar with GIS earlier than it's appearance in higher education

#### Similarities

- Policy
- User needs
- Data
- Budget
- Limitations  
in the use of data
- Technology  
(hardware, software)
- Metadata
- Absence of evaluation

#### Differences

- Staff
- Costs
- Provided services

## Phase II:

# Do libraries provide geographical information and GIS services? (1)



### Methodology

*Research Method:* website research and content analysis

*Size:* All Greek universities that offer studies related to studies in sciences which traditionally and mostly in practice, use GIS for gathering and analyzing geospatial information

*Data Collection:* research in websites of academic libraries  
Specific information regarding the examined questions was captured and stored in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet

## Phase II:

# Do libraries provide geographical information and GIS services? (2)



### Results

#### Geographic collections

out of **14** Higher Education Institutions that offer studies regarding Geography, Geology, Topography, Geoinformatics, Natural resources, Natural disasters etc only **2 libraries** offer digital geospatial data and digital maps

#### Services

- Geospatial data in local use (Library of AUA)
- Digital Maps services (Library of Aegean University)
- Evaluated links in digital geospatial context (LIC of HUA)
- Subject portal related to history of cartography (Library of TEI of Serres)

**Collection Development Policies** : None

**Institutional Repositories**: all the 4 libraries

(Vardakosta & Kapidakis, 2011)



## Key findings emerged from Phase I and Phase II



- a) the need for access and use of geographical/geospatial information and
- b) the lack of academic libraries to deliver geospatial collections and GIS services to their patrons

So,

the third phase aims to “map” the opinion of a group of people which uses the geographic information in their everyday life (GIS user’s)

## Phase III:

# What are GIS users' opinion about libraries' role in covering their geographical needs? (1)



## Methodology

*Research Method*: questionnaire (**20** questions in **4** sections)

*Sample*: GIS users all over Greece

*Data Collection*: The questionnaire was promoted:

- in print during the 7th Panhellenic Conference of HellasGIS (May 2012)
- posted on the website of HellasGIS, and on the geoportal "Geothea"
- via e-mail to GIS users to academic institutions, research centers public sector and private sector (companies that are engaged in GIS market) all over Greece (9/12-2/13)
- 325 responses which were limited to **304** most completed questionnaires

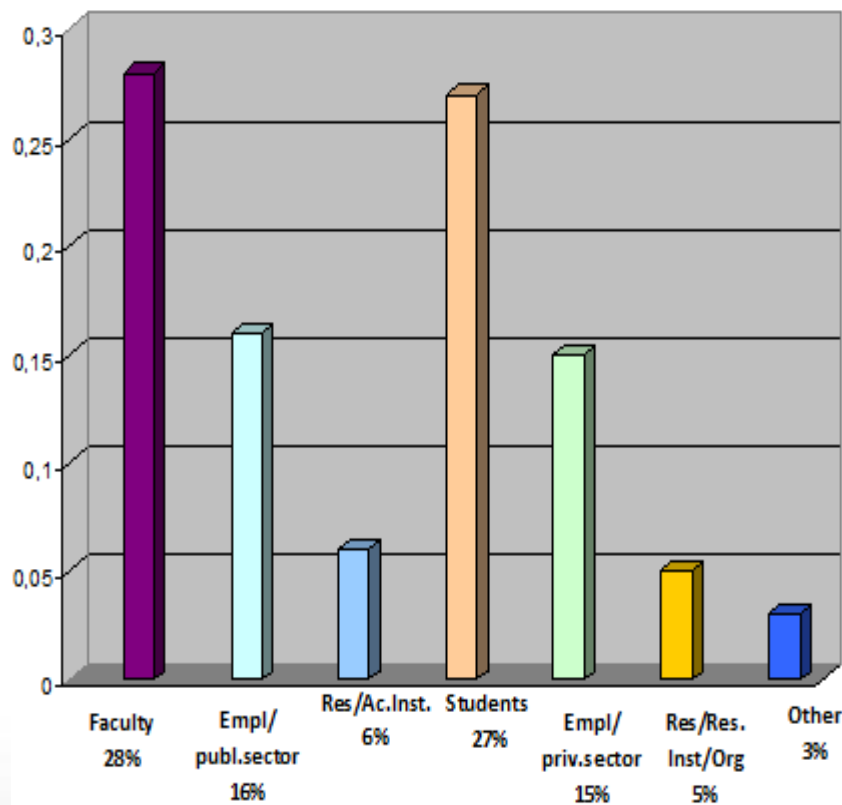
## Phase III:

# What are GIS users' opinion about libraries' role in covering their geographical needs? (2)

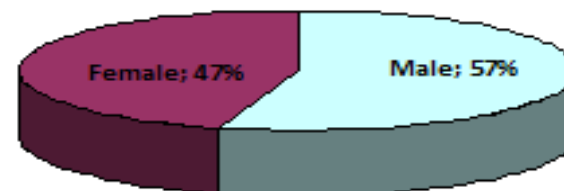


## Results(1)

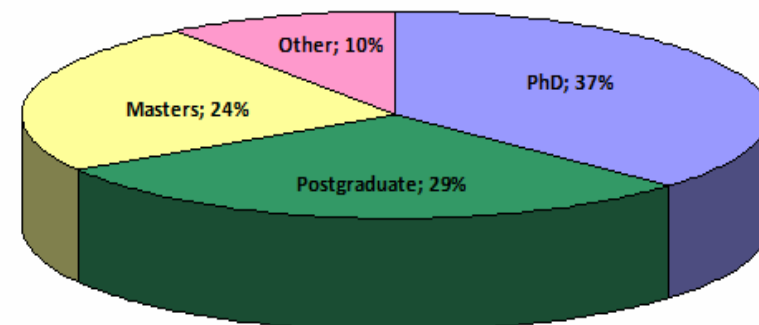
Professional Rank



Gender



Academic Qualification



## Phase III:

# What are GIS users' opinion about libraries' role in covering their geographical needs? (3)



## Results (2)

- The variety of disciplines that users are involved in, demonstrates GIS technology and data impact in today's information society
- GIS users do not use Greek libraries for covering geo-information needs *although* they recognize their role in collection and dissemination of geospatial information
- The implementation of geospatial collections is considered as a necessity in all types of libraries and therefore appropriate policies should be developed
- Open access consists an opportunity for the exploitation of geospatial data
- There are certain issues that should be thoroughly discussed and defined for geospatial data information (e.g. organization of data, policies, synergies)

# Conclusions (1)



- Geospatial data so far are produced by specific public organizations -usually for their own use- or commercial agencies
- The cost of geospatial data and the required infrastructure, hardware (computers, printers, digitizers, scanners, GPS units, and plotters) and software (commercial or open source) is quite expensive and prohibited for the low budgets that libraries sustain especially recent years
- Academic libraries in Greece have not developed efficient co-operations with their institution's departments (Geography, Geology, etc) which use geospatial information and technology for educational/research purposes
- There were no national or European programmes which could fund such an initiative in academic libraries (as it happened in US)
- So far, academic libraries in Greece do not collect geospatial data that are developed in their institution in order to proceed in organizing metadata, policy issues etc.

## Conclusions (2)



- Greek librarians do not seem to be familiar with geospatial data and probably curricula in Librarian's Schools should be enhanced or seminars should be organized as librarians will be the ones who will educate their patrons in the use of the service.

### **GIS users want libraries to :**

- adopt open access for providing better services
- diffuse the geospatial data produced by the parent institution
- Cooperate for developing common practices

# Strategic suggestions for geospatial collection development in Greek academic libraries



## 1. Librarians' education

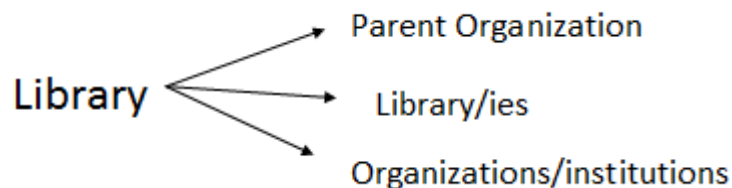
- Library Schools in Greece should enhance their curricula in order to familiarize the new librarians with the requirements of the geographical information

## 2. Policies

- Policies should be implemented:
  - a) by Heal-Link Consortium for all libraries and
  - b) by each library that wants to develop such a collection

## 3. Co-operations

- in many levels:



## 4. Technology

- Exploitation of the technological infrastructure (hardware, software, etc)



**Thank you!**

Ifigenia Vardakosta

[ifigenia@hua.gr](mailto:ifigenia@hua.gr)

[ifigenia@ionio.gr](mailto:ifigenia@ionio.gr)

Sarantos Kapidakis

[sarantos@ionio.gr](mailto:sarantos@ionio.gr)



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