

OGC Authentication Interoperability Experiment (IE) is based on best practice according to the European Spatial Data Infrastructure Network (ESDIN) project

OGC/ESDIN Interoperability Experiment shows success of Shibboleth software in setting up secure geospatial services

Shibboleth open source software can be used to set up secure geospatial services that comply with the INSPIRE Directive, an OGC interoperability experiment built on ESDIN best practice has shown.

The benefits of using Security Assertion Markup Language (SAML) to exchange authentication information to access protected ESDIN Federation services via both browser and desktop-based clients was demonstrated at a recent webinar. Four software producing organisations – Snowflake Software, Cadcorp, Envitia, con terra/ESRI, joined EDINA and the JRC (Joint Research Centre – European Commission) for the event hosted by the OGC and chaired by EDINA, an ESDIN project partner. In addition the Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy, Germany contributed an entirely separate Shibboleth Federation with two WMS (Web Mapping Services) and two identity providers. This demonstrated the software working with two entirely different federations.

“The ESDIN collaboration has made it possible to bring National mapping and cadastral agencies together with leading European universities to make secure federations of official location data and services in operational spatial data infrastructures.” says Dave Lovell, Executive Director of EuroGeographics, coordinator of the ESDIN project.

“ESDIN is testing practical existing solutions to help EC member states, candidate countries and European Free Trade Association (EFTA) States prepare their data for INSPIRE Annex 1 spatial data themes and improve access. The results of this experiment are very exciting as they reveal a potential INSPIRE compliant approach to ensure the data provided is only available to legitimate authorised users.”

“Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) content and service providers need to know who is accessing their valuable, secure, protected data,” says Chris Higgins from EDINA. “The ability for a group of organisations with common objectives - a federation - to securely exchange authentication information is a powerful SDI enabler. The OGC Web Services Shibboleth Interoperability Experiment is advancing best practices for implementing standards on federated security in transactions involving geospatial data and services.”

“The OGC is fortunate to be able to work with the ESDIN community on this project,” says Luis Bermudez, OGC's Director of Interoperability Certification. “The OGC Web Services Shibboleth Interoperability Experiment is showing that federated security involving geospatial data and services can be accomplished in a practical way, and this has implications for a wide variety of stakeholders.”

Martin Daly, Technical Director, Cadcorp added: "Cadcorp was pleased to take part in the Shibboleth IE and took the opportunity to further increase the functionality and interoperability of our OGC WMS and WFS clients; our users with stringent authentication requirements will benefit directly from the additional security that Shibboleth offers. Cadcorp is also grateful for the help and support of the EDINA staff throughout the process.”

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Notes to Editors

EuroGeographics is the membership association for the European national mapping, land registry and cadastral agencies. It brings together 56 members from 44 countries, from Portugal to the Ukraine and Iceland to Turkey. New members are elected at the Association's General Assembly.

EuroGeographics' members invest around €1.5 billion in the development of geographical information each year and use cutting-edge technology to create, manage, maintain and make available authoritative national databases.

EuroGeographics are developing an infrastructure to integrate their national data – including topographic and land information – to deliver the definitive pan-European location framework for a wide range of uses. By sharing best practice and creating standard data specifications and policies, EuroGeographics aims to ensure that Members' individual geographical databases are compatible and can interact with one another. This will provide Europe with the high quality geographical information it needs to develop policies and legislation for the environment, business competitiveness, public services, legal systems, security and more.

The Association moved its head office from Paris to Brussels in May 2010 enabling it to continue to provide objective and constructive support to the European Commission, Parliament and institutions of Europe more quickly, efficiently and effectively. Its new office is located at 76, Rue de Nord, just a few minutes away from the European Parliament and Commission buildings.

To find out more about EuroGeographics, please visit www.eurogeographics.org
To see our Members' geographical information in action, please visit our showcase at www.youtube.com/eurogeographics

About European Spatial Data Infrastructure Network (ESDIN)

ESDIN is a collaboration between mapping and cadastral agencies, academic institutions and technology providers to help prepare data for the INSPIRE Directive. It will benefit a wide range of people including data users and suppliers, systems integrators, software vendors, consultants, academics, those working in standard development and implementation and those involved in establishing spatial data infrastructures.

ESDIN is co-ordinated by EuroGeographics and supported by funding from the European Commission. The project started in September 2008 and will end in February 2011. More information is available at: www.esdin.eu