

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1848/01  
by Angelika Niebler (PPE-DE)  
to the Commission

Subject: Use of geoinformation in the Member States

Geoinformation (geographical and spatial data describing the features of a particular country) form an essential part of the knowledge available in modern information and communications science. It is required at all levels of administration, the economy, science and by the public at large. It is the basis for planning in numerous fields, such as for infrastructure projects in the energy, water and telecommunications sectors, waste management, telematics, environmental protection and nature conservation, and in the insurance industry. Geoinformation is an increasingly important commodity worldwide. Its availability is a crucial factor in taking decisions on location and investment. The USA spends USD 7 billion a year on developing geodata infrastructure.

1. To what extent does the Commission monitor practice and developments in the Member States in relation to the collection and compilation of geodata and their transfer to interested individuals (data access)?
2. In the Commission's view, would it not be necessary, in order to create a single market for geoinformation, to lay down Community-wide minimum criteria to establish transparent procedures for the collection, compilation and transfer of geodata?
3. In the Commission's view, should there be an improvement in cooperation between the Member States' agencies responsible for the management of geodata? To what extent could Community funds be used for that purpose?