

ISPRS Geospatial Hackathon

Hackathons are events in which people gather together to develop a software project within, usually, 36-48 hours. Even though many hackathon projects include a “geospatial” aspect, this is usually not the focus. Those who focus on “geospatial technologies” are usually hosted by a company, limiting the technologies/data that could be relied on. With the emergence of Open Data and Open Software, the developers could initiate a project in a more independent way. In addition, we are also aware that Citizen Science is an emerging research area in the world. This was officially recognised at the ISPRS congress held in Prague, leading to the formation of the WG V/3 entitled “Promotion of Regional Collaboration in Citizen Science and Geospatial Technology”. Consequently, the first ISPRS geospatial hackathon was organised in Ankara, Turkey on 22-23 September by WG V/3 and WG V/4 with the theme of “citizen science”. We wanted to promote open technologies and share our enthusiasm on citizen science with our colleagues and students.

The two day event was hosted at the Hacettepe University Technopolis with 82 registered participants. The project proposals were collected in advance and 15 projects were announced on the event’s web-site (www.geohack.hacettepe.edu.tr). The project topics range from VGI applications to algorithm development for GIS performance improvements on the web. Three projects have been developed during the hackathon and presented in the end. Those who have not actively participated in software development activities, could attend the unconference talks and the tutorials.

Two full-day tutorials have been held on the second day. Pınar Dağ, a prominent open data supporter and data journalist who is also teaching at Kadir Has University, gave the first tutorial. She is one of the board members of an NGO entitled “Open Data & Data Journalism” in which they share news, data, reports regarding open data and data journalism informing the Turkish public (<https://www.avvg.org.tr/>). Pınar has organised “Open Data Training” tutorial in which topics ranging from governmental open data policies to tools to analyse open data quality have been addressed. Hazal Sülelioğlu and Dora Uzunsoy, computer engineers working at the Özgür Yazılım company (<https://ozguryazilim.com.tr/en/>) are experts on open source software development. In most open software projects, including but not limited to QGIS, software developers are actively working around the globe. It is almost impossible to manage such large projects without a version control system. Therefore, we were glad that they have hosted the second tutorial entitled “Introduction to Git Version Control System”. The importance of relying on Git version control system, how it supports distributed development are some of the key topics discussed in the tutorial. Hands-on activities have also been carried out so that the attendees learned about initiating a project using Git.

Looking forward to the coming geospatial hackathons.

Dr. Berk Anbaroglu – ISPRS WG V/4 Co-Chair,
Prof. Dr. Sultan Kocaman – ISPRS WG V/3 Chair

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Figure 1 The 'hacker space' of the Geospatial Hackathon



Figure 2 First unconference: monitoring the water quality of Uzungöl, Turkey



Figure 3 Geospatial Hackathon provided an opportunity for networking and learning