

WARSAW SPATIAL HUMANITIES

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From a map user's point of view.
On usability and cognitive issues
in cartography



online, Zoom



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#WarSHum

Izabela Gołębiowska

Izabela Gołębiowska is an associate professor at University of Warsaw, Faculty of Geography and Regional Studies. She received the PhD degree in cartography from the University of Warsaw in 2011. Her research interests cover topics in cartography, (geo)visualization, GIScience with focus on perception and cognition, thus including map user studies. She has been a PI of projects in thematic cartography, color use in (spatial) data visualization or geodashboard design. She has been also involved in utilizing GIS and geovisualization within other disciplines, such as planetary geology and analog Mars simulation.

Abstract

A map is one of the most useful mediums for spatial data presentation. However, a map works only if it is understandable for its target audience. Map design is a complex process guided by recommendations developed within cartography in order to obey map logic, cartographic semantics and graphic hierarchy. Moreover, map design should also be guided by requirements, preferences as well as limitations of users. In order to better understand users' perspective, empirical user studies are being conducted in cartography. The aim of this kind of research is to provide clues for informed decisions for map makers. This kind of investigation covers cognitive and perceptual processes involved in spatial data acquisition from map, map-based spatial reasoning and visual behavior while reading maps. It is conducted with the use of knowledge and methods taken from other disciplines, like psychology, human-computer interaction or usability studies. The talk includes considerations of the motivations for user-oriented studies in cartography with an emphasis put on methods, challenges addressed and achieved outcomes.



Faculty of History
University of Warsaw