Analysis of International and National Boundary Settlement and Demarcation Issues

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The Federal Public Service Finance consists of 6 general administrations.

One of those general administrations is the General Administration of the Patrimonial Documentation.
The General Administration of the Patrimonial Documentation (GAPD)

The main assignments of the Patrimonial Documentation are:

- the construction of the patrimonial documentation;
- the distribution of patrimonial information;
- the provision of services based on the patrimonial documentation

On an operational level, the General Administration of Patrimonial Documentation consists of 5 administrations:

- Administration Surveys & valuations
- Administration Legal security
- Administration Collection and exchange of information
- Administration Patrimonial departments
- Administration Non-fiscal recovery
The « Boundary » notion

Terminus was the god who protected boundary markers; his name was the Latin word for such a marker. Sacrifices were performed to sanctify each boundary stone, and landowners celebrated a festival called the "Terminalia" in Terminus' honor each year on February 23.

Terminus is often pictured as a bust on a boundary stone

2. Belgian State Boundaries Management by GAPD

Several successive steps:

- A reference documents research at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and at the National Archives of Belgium (More than 3000 documents scanned)
- Several teams carried out a field inspection and a statement of the description of the boundary marks;
- Now, we are studying the documents and we are trying to determinate with our neighbours the exact position of the boundary by comparing the boundary position between reference documents and information collected on the field;
- Alphanumeric database (web application).
Belgian State Boundaries Management by GAPD

Main documents are:
• Original Treaty;
• Original PV and modifying PV;
• Sketches attached to the original Treaty;
• Cadastral Map;
• Photos;
• Coordinates;
• …
Belgian State Boundaries Management by GAPD: web application

General Administration of the Patrimonial Documentation
3. Boundary Commissions

Belgium benefits of permanent Boundary Commissions only for two of its four bordering countries:
- between Belgium and The Netherlands
- between Belgium and Germany

Boundary Commissions: Main tasks

- To ensure the conformity of the position of existing boundary stones with treaty and PV’s previously signed by the parties;
- To draw up geographic position of all boundary marks;
- To ensure at regular interval the good state of boundary stones;
- To place new boundary stones in conformity with reference documents when old ones have disappeared or have been displaced;
- To replace or to repaint damaged boundary stones;
- To set up technical groups responsible for the field works;
- To control and approve the planning and results of the field work;
- To communicate about changes and tasks at the boundary line;
- To prepare new treaties when necessary.

➔ The boundary commission is not entitled to change the boundary line.
State Boundaries of Europe (SBE) goal is to compile a multipurpose State Boundaries of Europe Dataset, meant to be the “definitive” description of all European state boundaries. The State Boundaries of Europe project aims at providing and maintaining:

- The administrative and legal definition of State Boundaries, based on boundary Treaties,
- Their precise geometric description expressed in ETRS89 coordinates of boundary points, marks and lines.

The conceptual model of SBE has been developed by swisstopo.
Project: State Boundaries of Europe (SBE)

- The collection of high precision data → Time
- Intermediate solution: most accurate boundary representation based on large-scale national dataset (topographic or cadastre).
- The boundaries will be stored in 3 different levels of detail and compiled in a common INSPIRE compliant database.
  - First level (original SBE database): the legal definition of state boundaries with precise geometric description expressed in ETRS89 coordinates as described in official boundary treaties.
  - Second level (database in development): state boundaries as included in national topographic master databases in large scale.
  - Third level (common database of edge-matched state boundaries in medium scale): generalised boundaries in medium scale for use on regional level based on EuroGeographics existing products.

5. Conclusion

Thank you for your attention