

Numerous studies and analyses are in place that look at how quickly modern trends in technological and scientific development are becoming obsolete. Things are moving with such rapidity that even before new knowledge and technology have been mastered – not to mention the time it takes to implement them in large systems – they become outdated or new variants emerge. I leave it to your consideration if these are also better. Geodesy as a science is strongly connected with, sometimes even dependent on, developments in other fields, which is why the most widely used basic geodetic tasks become a meeting point of two completely different worlds. A survey marker, physically sunk into our Earth's eternity, on one side and new technologies, bursting with youthful energy, on the other. Somewhere in between you will come across surveying procedures defined by different regulations and instructions.

One can no longer expect to stick to the same procedures and services throughout one's surveying career, hopefully a long and fruitful one. New technologies have been literally put into the cradle of today's children, while (we) older generations have to get acquainted with them and start applying them. Everything is high up in the clouds. Sometimes I get the feeling that other professions push us in all directions, like the wind blows clouds across the sky. In such circumstances, geodesy should make use of its inquisitive and entrepreneurial spirit and offer its users new, better, faster and more comprehensive solutions that can only be offered by a profession that knows how to connect and coordinate – geodesy has that ability. On the other hand we have to be able to persuade our users that only with our help can they become better and more successful.

I guess that the moment is never right to develop new services, products and approaches; nevertheless, it is worth doing in times of prosperity, when there is considerable market demand for our knowledge and services, for young professionals with state-of-the art knowledge and old professionals with experience, when clients and investors have relatively adequate funding and of course a desire to introduce novelties and improvements into their businesses. As long as new investments are driven by optimism, we may as well have our heads in the clouds. Such ideal moments hardly permit enough time for traditional geodetic work, which is the reason why the design of innovations is unfortunately pushed aside as everybody hopes the cloud will never disperse. A hope that tradition alone is sufficient for our profession to survive and ideally prosper and establish itself in society seems vain.

Only the changes offered by the bonds that link geodesy with society and modern trends should be our basis to develop new and comprehensive solutions/services that cross the borders of geodesy. We, land surveyors, are the first ones to be convinced – the question of confidence again – that new market and government demands are our challenge and not an obstacle; we have the answers and if it happens that they are not at hand at a given moment, we know how to find them. Everything is up in a cloud today, even geodesy. For how long will it remain so? A colleague of mine answered: 'Wisdom only comes with old age.' Luckily, he did not specify how old is old age.

Best of luck!