

## Press release

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# New GfK Europe Map Edition offers comprehensive coverage of Europe's postcodes, from Albania to Turkey

**Many changes have taken place in Europe in recent years. Regional reforms were once again carried out in 2009 in many locations. The 2010 update of the GfK Europe Map Edition reflects these changes and provides marketing, sales, controlling and management divisions with a reliable cartographic basis for planning regional activities. The map edition includes up-to-date digital maps of the postcodes and municipalities for 42 European countries.**

GfK GeoMarketing's cartographers have researched thousands of changes that have occurred over the past year to Europe's postal and administrative boundaries. Particularly affected by regional administrative and postal restructurings are the Baltic States, Switzerland and the countries comprising former Yugoslavia. All of these reforms are reflected in the newly available GfK Europe Map Edition 2010/2011, which offers gapless, overlap-free coverage of all of Europe.

With around 1,000 digital maps of 42 countries, the map edition forms the basis for geomarketing, or the analysis and visualization of company and market data on digital maps. The maps play an essential role in international expansion and sales territory planning, serving as an indispensable component of geomarketing software or geographic information systems (GIS). These software applications are used to analyze and display the geographic component of company and market data on digital maps. The maps in the Europe Map Edition are part of GfK GeoMarketing's cartographic coverage of 240 countries, the world's largest collection of digital administrative and postcode maps.

### **Accurate market analyses with up-to-date maps**

An up-to-date cartographic basis is essential for geomarketing, otherwise addresses of business locations and customers cannot be correctly associated with maps. Because all addresses contain a postcode, they are the most important link between maps and company data. Up-to-date maps that reflect the latest postcode and administrative boundaries are necessary for ensuring that address data can be accurately imported and visualized in a mapping software. This also applies to data compiled at the level of municipalities, as is often the case with regionalized socio-demographic information on target groups. GfK GeoMarketing carries out annual updates of its European maps, which entails an immense amount of research, as each European country is characterized by unique conditions.

"Most countries use numerals for their postal systems, but some, such as Great Britain, employ a mix of numbers and letters," explains Klaus Dittmann, head of cartography at GfK GeoMarketing. "On the other hand, Ireland only has postcode divisions in Dublin and Cork – here, municipal boundaries are the primary means for localizing data and addresses."

In some countries, such as Albania, postcodes have only relatively recently been established. "The use of postcodes in Albania emerged as the country became more integrated into Europe," explains Dittmann. "These are just some of many examples that demonstrate why it's so important to use up-to-date postal and administrative boundaries when planning operations in different regional markets."

### **Countries affected by recent boundary changes**

#### **Italy**

Italy has undergone significant changes due to various regional reforms over the past several years. In the past year, three new provinces were created, resulting in new classifications for 111 municipalities.

#### **Latvia**

The administrative reform of July 1, 2009 resulted in a reduction in the number of Latvia's municipalities from 522 to 118. All 33 districts were dissolved and replaced with five so-called "planning regions".

#### **Lithuania**

Substantial changes occurred to Lithuania's five-digit postcodes: 165 postcodes were added, 46 were eliminated and 2,729 were changed.

#### **Macedonia**

Macedonia's official bureau of statistics established a new classification system for the country's municipalities, which is now available for the first time in map form.

### **Montenegro**

All maps were redigitized and expanded to include the 132 five-digit postcodes for the first time.

### **The Netherlands and Belgium**

All maps were completely redigitized at a higher level of detail, corresponding to a conventional map scale of 1:50,000. Coverage of the country's cities has also been significantly expanded: The maps now depict 2,201 cities in the Netherlands and 3,565 cities in Belgium, all of which are organized into five size categories. This is a substantial increase in coverage from the 497 Dutch cities and 367 Belgium cities depicted in the previous edition.

### **Norway**

Four new postcodes were added (at the most detailed, four-digit postcode level). Other updates include eight boundary changes and two name changes.

### **Poland**

Five cities were completely redigitized at the five-digit postcode level: Rzeszow (147 regions), Sopot (153 regions), Zielona Gora (352 regions), Opole (474 regions) and Koszalin (497 regions).

### **Serbia**

All maps were completely redigitized and expanded, offering coverage of 1,139 five-digit postcodes. The level of detail was also increased, corresponding to a conventional map scale of 1:75,000.

### **Switzerland**

In 2009, a district reform occurred in the canton of Bern: The canton was restructured into 10 districts (prior to January 1, 2010, there were 26 districts). This reduced the total number of districts from 167 to 151 (as of January 1, 2010).

### **Great Britain**

Eight new "postcode sectors" were added at the four-digit postcode level – as of 2010, there now are 9,514 postcode sectors.

### **High-quality, worldwide coverage in all standard map formats**

Some of the features of GfK GeoMarketing's maps include comprehensive, gapless coverage as well as overlap-free, seamlessly fitting boundaries and infinite zoom; also, many maps have both international and local place-name attributions.

Like all of the digital maps sold by GfK GeoMarketing, the new GfK Europe Map Edition is available in all standard digital map formats, including \*.shp (ESRI), \*.mid/\*.mif (MapInfo), \*.gdb (GeoDatabase) and \*.lay (GfK GeoMarketing). For the first time, maps are also available in Oracle (Spatial) database format for Oracle Business Intelligence applications.

**Europe-wide availability, with supplementary purchasing power data**

GfK GeoMarketing offers the new digital maps for 42 European countries as stand-alone country sets and as part of a Western Europe, Eastern Europe or comprehensive Europe package. Seamlessly fitting, up-to-date GfK purchasing power data are also available for all of Europe.

**Bonus for RegioGraph users**

Maps in the RegioGraph \*.lay format also include background maps with integrated Tele Atlas street maps. The inclusion of street map data makes it possible to analyze customers and regions down to the level of street segments using GfK GeoMarketing's sales territory planning software RegioGraph. The \*.lay format of the Europe Map Edition is particularly indispensable for Europe-wide sales territory planning, because the integrated street map data and background maps allow users to automatically take into account natural barriers such as rivers and mountains in addition to traffic flows and customer accessibility.





Users of the geomarketing solution RegioGraph get both the maps and corresponding purchasing power data for the price of one. The Europe Map edition can also be obtained as part of a subscription: This ensures that users receive regular updates as they become available, maintain the right to discounted updates and save 50 percent off the retail price of the first and subsequent orders.

**Additional information** on the GfK Europe Map Edition can be found at [www.gfk-geomarketing.com/europe](http://www.gfk-geomarketing.com/europe). Sales contact for further questions: Thorsten Lauszus, Tel. +49 (0)7251 9295145, or [t.lauszus@gfk-geomarketing.com](mailto:t.lauszus@gfk-geomarketing.com)

**Print-quality illustrations** can be found at [www.gfk-geomarketing.com/maps\\_europe2010](http://www.gfk-geomarketing.com/maps_europe2010).

**About GfK GeoMarketing**

GfK GeoMarketing is one of the largest providers of geomarketing services in Europe for customers and users from all branches of trade. Key business areas include:

-  Consultancy and reports
-  Market data
-  Digital maps
-  Geomarketing software RegioGraph

GfK GeoMarketing is a subsidiary of the globally active GfK Group. Ranked fourth among the world's market research institutes, the GfK is represented by approximately 10,000 employees belonging to more than 115 subsidiaries located in 100 countries.