

IRANIAN NATIONAL ATLAS SOFTWARE: A Package for Generating Thematic Maps

Behdad Ghazanfari and Gasso Haroni

National Cartographic Centre of Iran (N.C.C.),

P.O. Box 13185-1684, Tehran, Iran

Fax: ++98 21 6001971

E-Mail: NCC_IRAN@IREARN.BITNET

Today, there are many institutes and organizations who are dealing with collecting data on aspects of society and economy. These data are gathered in order to be used by certain people, in certain times, and for certain purposes. One of the ways that these information can be delivered to users is by maps and atlases. Due to the increase of complexity of our society, the amount of information regarding to a national atlas is of a great volume. The domain of people using the national atlas of a country is too large. Therefore, the users are not specifically defined and to be an effective device, their design should be based on many cartographic considerations.

Nowadays, the challenge facing atlas production is to explore new ways and techniques whereby the information can be stored, up-dated, retrieved, and delivered to users appropriately and quickly. The most favourable possibility seems to be the application of computers and using software which can be utilized by non-cartographers.

In this respect software for thematic map production have been developed in the National Cartographic Center of Iran (N.C.C.). The software is compatible with standard IBM VGA graphics hardware. Pull-down menus and interactive graphics enable users to access the database underlying it friendly. Two approaches for generating maps are designed: location and theme.

By selecting location, user can specify name of a province, county, or metropolitan. He or she is also able to point those areas by mouse bottom. In this case the user can visualize a small scale map of the country. Then by pointing to a province, map of the pointed province will be displayed on screen. It can go further until the smallest sub-area is shown on the monitor. After satisfying with the area to be mapped, the general theme such as population, agriculture, etc. will be asked and may proceed until the most detailed subject is selected.

Alternatively, a user may first select a general theme and hierarchically proceed to a detailed subject. Then the sequence for graphics will be carried out.