

# **THE SOCIAL-ECONOMIC ATLAS OF TUNISIA (ASET)**

Mohsen DHIEB

Professor of geography (cartography)

Faculty Letters of Humanities and, "SYFACTE Laboratory", Sfax, Tunisia,  
mohsendhieb2003@yahoo.fr

## Introduction:

Until now, the Tunisian cartographic context was characterized by the lack of a complete national atlases; the project of the Laboratory SYFACTE is to realize one social-economic Atlas of Tunisia (ASET) with an updatable and available geographic database, creation of a Web site, and future elaboration of other derived products such as scholar atlases or simplified general maps.

## Objectives:

The main functions of this social-economic atlas are to describe the Tunisian territory, to portray its regions and towns and to make readers informed about the main characteristics of the distribution of population, resources, and wellness. Besides this classical version of the Atlas, one essential component of the project consists in producing an interactive version of the Atlas (ASEIT) which has been facilitated a lot by a Tunisian-French cooperation between the Laboratory SYFACTE and the team of Research RIATE that already developed the HYPERCARTE application, either a tool of cartography and spatial multiscalar analysis finalized initially on an international space, the regions of the European union and that could be tested and validated on a national space, Tunisia.

## Methodology:

The ASET program as well as the ASEIT program request two complementary types of approach: the "numeric" approach, that integrates the geographical data in one GIS coupled with one Geographical data base on the one hand; and an analogical approach (paper) that can be easily handled and read by multiple users whether belonging to the international community of geographers and cartographers, or by other categories of users on the other hand.

The majority of the maps of the ASET are based on the data collected by specialized national agencies and institutions, particularly the National Statistical Institute. However, some need terrain investigation and particular efforts to be furnished.

## Results:

Some of the maps based on the last census results of 2004 have been already drawn whereas most of the other maps still in progress. The general scale of the maps is 1:2000000; however, some of them have greater or smaller scales depending on the data density.

Conclusion: Despite some technical, organisational and scientific difficulties, the ASET program which is held by Laboratory SYFACTE is in progress and we can say seriously that we may have the all maps of future national ATLAS of Tunisia in few years.