Requirements for the map’s background-image

- Format: .png
- Dimensions: width/height ratio of 2367 : 2190 [1][2]; **no frame**
- Colors: use strong colors

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Additional info about how the map is set up and how the implementation of the background-image works. This is technical, it might be helpful for map creators to understand the system and get the best results. In case you don’t understand anything or you are not interested in this, never mind, just follow the three bold points on top.

The visualization of map is made with three layers of visual info (paintings). One at the bottom, in the middle and on top. Like a sandwich. Those layers are not transparent or partly transparent. Let’s assume the top bread of the sandwich (top layer) is half transparent. In that case you would see the meat and salad through the top bread. Your eyes would see a mix of the meat/salad’s and bread’s colors. That’s how the system works.

In detail: The layer at the bottom is the background-image (for variants without a background-image there is a background-color as default).

On the middle layer, the geography of the map is painted (water and land zones with their borders). This middle layer is half transparent so the background-image / bottom layer is partly be visible even if it’s covered by the geography. [3]

The geography of the middle layer is painted with SVG elements [4]. Each zone, i.e. (par, lon) is a single SVG element. The whole geography is a puzzle of SVG elements, all elements fitting into each other. This is important because we have some ‘dead zones’ like Switzerland and Ireland:

Switzerland and all other ‘dead zones’ have no SVG elements, they are holes in the geography puzzle [5]. Because of this, the background-image / bottom layer is fully visible in the position of the ‘dead zones’. (Imagine those ‘dead zones’ as holes in the top bread of the sandwich). This gives you styling opportunities for those ‘dead zones’. For example, you can paint cheese and chocolate in the background-image at the position where Switzerland is. Since the geography does not cover ‘dead zones’, the colors of cheese and chocolate would be fully visible and not mixed with the colors of geography. As mentioned, in all other zones, only a share (40%) of the background-image’s colors are visible after passing the geography. That’s why it’s important to use strong colors for styling ordinary zones (not dead zones). Use cases for styling ordinary zones are i.e. waves in water zones or mountains on land zones.

On the top layer, the rest of the map is painted: Units, legends, cities, orders. These elements are not transparent, they fully cover everything underneath.

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[1]: Has to be precise. The image doesn’t need be 2367px (pixels) wide and 2190px high, but it’s important that the ratio is 2367/2190. 1px difference is ok. Make the image big enough, I can always make it smaller – enlarging images would result in a loss of quality.

[2]: In general the dimension of the map and the dimension of the background-image must be the exactly the same. The SVG map I received had the dimensions of 2539px X 2244px. Since there was a frame around it, I had to adjust it in a way that only the map without the frame is visible, resulting a different width/height ratio (2367/2190).

[3]: In numbers: the middle layer is 40% transparent (opacity 0.6), meaning that 40% of the background-image’s colors are visible after passing the middle layer. This parameter (opacity 0.6) is experimental. It seems to work well to give each, the background-image and geography a fair share of attention, but we might have to calibrate it, depending on how the result looks.

[4]: https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scalable_Vector_Graphics

[5]: Basically the system allows to paint also ‘dead zones’ as SVG elements, so that there are no holes in the SVG puzzle. But having holes in the puzzle is probably the better solution for maps with a .png background-image, since it allows more flexibility in respect of styling.