

THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE ROMANIAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

MAY 31 – JUNE 3, 2012, REȘIȚA

Scientific and teaching meetings organised in various parts of the country represent a very important aspect of the activity developed by the Romanian Geographical Society. The event brings together teaching staff from universities, high-schools and secondary schools, as well as researchers from higher education institutions and geographical research institutes. On these occasions the participants present their scientific results, and the progress made in teaching Geography and promoting this discipline of special relevance in the formation of the new generations.

This year the Conference was organised in the town of Reșița by the Romanian Geographical Society, the local “Eftimie Murgu” University, Caraș-Severin County Council, the Mayorality of Reșița Municipium and Caraș-Severin Teachers’ House. The Conference theme was *Geographical Space, as Support of the Human Community*. The proceedings unfolded within five sections: Physical Geography, Human Geography, Regional Geography and Geopolitics; Geography and Geography-related Education in Preuniversity Institutions; Geography of Tourism, Services and Trade, and Geography of Environment.

Among the notable communications read in the plenary session, those delivered by Acad. **Dan Bălțeanu** on the **EU Strategy in the Danube Region** and Prof. **Pompei Cocian** on **Territorial Cohesion, a Regional Development Desideratum**, aroused special interest.

The papers held within sections highlighted the efforts made by an impressive number of young researchers and teachers in geographical research and education. Young participants also joined the field application in the Semenic Mountains, many of them getting a first-hand knowledge of an area they had never visited before.

Continuing a praiseworthy tradition of the meetings of Romanian Geographical Society members, the event included a two-day trip on Serbian territory, with visits to *Novi Sad* and *Belgrade*, as well as to the monasteries of *Hopova*, *Velika-Remeta* and *Krusedol*.

Călin Dănuț

ANNUAL SESSION OF SCIENTIFIC COMMUNICATIONS,  
THE INSTITUTE OF GEOGRAPHY, ROMANIAN ACADEMY

JUNE 22, 2012, BUCHAREST

**Geographical research within the context  
of the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region**

The European Union Strategy for the Danube Region, signed by 14 riverine states of the Danube Basin and adopted by the European Council in 2011, aims at ensuring territorial cohesion and sustainable development within a space characterised by great socio-economic diversity and significant intra-regional disparities. The main objective of the Strategy is to reduce development differences among the states of the Danube Region through sustainable use of Region's territorial potential and local particularities, and through integration of the sectoral development policies and strategies. In this way, the EU Danube Strategy acts as a target of comprehensive macro-regional cooperation among the Danube Region states along four major pillars: connectivity, environmental protection, economic development and governance, which include a number of specific priority areas focusing on issues of environmental risk management, water quality, biodiversity and landscape preservation, promotion of culture and tourism, economic growth, use of energy, increase of institutional capacity, etc. In view of the EU Danube Strategy objectives and areas of actions, geography could play an active role by undertaking research and interdisciplinary projects, closely linked to the objectives of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region.

In this respect, this year the Institute of Geography of the Romanian Academy devoted its annual communication session to studies that could initiate, continue or promote researches that might well fall under the topics of the EU Strategy and meet its objectives. Therefore, the panel presentations focused on interdisciplinary projects and/proposals concerning environmental protection and risks, socio-economic vulnerability and climate change effects on society, scientific services for the policy and decision-making process; integrated systems of data for research applications, particularly in the Danube Basin – Black Sea Continuum; future development perspectives within the context of the new research directions of global sustainability as outlined at Rio+20 Conference in Rio de Janeiro, June 2012; and last but not least, on past researches on the Danube Valley in Romania as an example and starting point for new research applications.

The sections of this annual session were structured into three themes covering several topics of the EU Danube Strategy. Consequently, presentations falling under researches into the European dimension of Danube Valley referred to studies and applications undertaken within interdisciplinary European projects on land use / land cover, geomorphology, hydrology and biodiversity along the Danube Valley. The two other sections were centered on particular case-studies concerning environmental quality and natural hazards, as well as sustainable development perspectives for the economy and local communities along the Romanian Danube Valley. Apart from their relevant scientific results, such particular approaches are reliable premises for interdisciplinary project proposals within the context of the European Strategy for the Danube Region.

*Diana Dogaru*

## INTERNATIONAL PROJECT

The Institute of Geography is the co-ordinator of the Romanian – Bulgarian Project on **Romanian – Bulgarian Cross-Border Joint Natural and Technological Hazards Assessment in the Danube Floodplain. The Calafat-Vidin – Turnu Măgurele-Nikopole sector (ROBUHAZ-DUN)**, financed by the Romanian – Bulgarian Cross-border Co-operation Programme, 2007-2013. The Project is scheduled to develop over an 18-month interval (May 23, 2012 – November 24, 2013).

Partners:

- **National Institute of Geophysics, Geodesy and Geography, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (IGGG)**
- **National Institute of Research and Development for Optoelectronics, INOE 2000, Research Institute for Analytical Instrumentation (ICIA), Cluj-Napoca Subsidiary**
- **Geological Institute, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (GIBAS)**
- **University of Craiova, Geography Department**

Project manager: Prof. Dan Bălțeanu, Director of the Institute of Geography of the Romanian Academy.

The main goal of this Project is the elaboration of a joint digital (GIS) integrated spatial database for the Danube Floodplain sector between Calafat-Vidin and Turnu Măgurele-Nikopole.

The Project is aimed at identifying dangerous natural phenomena (floods, droughts, heavy rainfall and landslides), the major sources of environmental degradation in the analysed area, as well as assessing socio-economic vulnerability to these phenomena. One of the main results is to find joint research methodologies for the elaboration of **tailored maps of natural and technological hazards**.

The outcomes are expected to offer local and regional decision-makers the necessary scientific support in **the management of extreme phenomena and the identification of optimum sustainable development and environmental protection strategies**. Another target is **to raise people's awareness** in responding to hazardous phenomena occurring in the Romanian – Bulgarian sector of the Danube Floodplain between Calafat-Vidin – Turnu Măgurele-Nikopole. This is to be achieved by organising a series of field campaigns disseminating Project results through graphical materials accessible to several target groups (pupils, students, land owners, local decision-makers, etc.).

The Project was officially launched on June 28, 2012 at the Institute of Geography 12, Dimitrie Racoviță st., sector 2, Bucharest, when the First Steering Committee Meeting between partners took place. More information on Project activities and events is available at [www.robuhaz-dun.eu](http://www.robuhaz-dun.eu).

*Mihaela Sima*

