

## 14<sup>th</sup> INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON URBAN HEALTH (ICUH)

Health Equity: The New Urban Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals

COIMBRA, PORTUGAL, SEPTEMBER 26–29, 2017

*The International Conference on Urban Health (ICUH)* is the Annual Meeting of the International Society for Urban Health, the pioneer global organization bringing together experts from across academia, government, NGOs and business to improve the health of cities. The ISUH was founded in 2002 at The New York Academy of Medicine as an organization primarily concerned with building the field of urban health through its annual scientific meeting, the *International Conference of Urban Health (ICUH)*. The ICUH is thus a critical platform for sharing lessons, both successes and problems, to promote learning and progress. Because more than half the world's population lives in cities in all regions of the world, and since this number is increasing each year, the roles of the ISUH and ICUH in global health will only become more significant" (Source: ISUH webpage).

The scope of the 14<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Urban Health, **an Elsevier Conference**, was to bring together specialists and community leaders across disciplines and sectors, geographic boundaries, to exchange ideas, advance policies and practice to promote health and equity for individuals in urban settings, to advance attention to and understanding of the multiple determinants of urban health and the effects of urbanization and to building networks among individuals engaged in urban health regionally and worldwide (Source: ICUH2017 webpage). The Conference Chairs were Paula Santana, *University of Coimbra, Portugal* and Shamim Hayder Talukder, *CEO of Eminence (Bangladesh) and President of ISUH*.

The ICUH2017 received a number of over 1000 abstracts from 80 countries and only 30% were selected for oral presentation. The theme of the 2017 conference, "Health Equity: The New Urban Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals", want to study how the international sustainable development agenda can improve health, promoting equity, and reorienting the sustainable future of cities, in light of the emerging HABITAT III New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The conference topics were:

- Understanding and Addressing Demographic, Epidemiological and Societal Changes in Cities;
- Urban Governance and Equity-oriented Policies;
- Healthy Urban Planning, Measurement and Metrics, Data and Research;
- Health Care in Cities: Access, Services and Quality;
- Environmental Health and Urban Sustainability.

The Conference had also feature four parallel sessions presenting abstracts under the theme "Culture of Health" as well as two pre-formed panels under the theme "Culture of Health" and "Healthy Placemaking", which are supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF). The Conference structure was: Pre-conference workshops, Welcome Plenary, Plenary Sessions, Parallel Sessions – Abstracts and Panels, Poster Sessions, Extra Sessions, Gala Dinner, Field trips, Site visits.

Speakers and Chairs included: Pedro Pita Barros, *Nova University of Lisbon, Portugal*; John Beard, *World Health Organization (WHO), Switzerland*; Eugenie Birch, *UN-Habitat World Urban Campaign, USA*; Birgit de Boissezon, *European Commission*; Jo Ivey Boufford, *The New York Academy of Medicine, USA*; Waleska Caiaffa, *Federal University of Minas Gerais, Brazil*; Joan Clos, *Executive Director, UN-Habitat*; Jason Corburn, *University of California Berkeley, USA*; Carlos Dora, *World Health Organization, Switzerland*; Marcus Grant, *Advisor to WHO Healthy Cities Programme, UK*; Marian Jacobs, *University of Cape Town, South Africa*; Lidia Morawska, *Queensland University of Technology, Australia*; Susan Parnell, *University of Cape Town, South Africa*; Mark W. Rosenberg, *Queen's University, Canada*; Gérard Salem, *Université de Paris Ouest, France*; Remy Sietchiping, *United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), Kenya*.

Romania had one speaker, Gabriel Camară (*Faculty of Geography and Geology, "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iași*), who presented the paper **Emigration of medical staff, national health system infrastructure and access of urban population to health services in Romania**, in the parallel session **Health care needs & access in Europe**, from the main topic **Health Care in Cities: Access, Services and Quality**; his abstract, previously accepted for oral presentation has been awarded a scholarship from The New York Academy of Medicine, to attend the Conference.

The next *International Conference on Urban Health (ICUH)* took place in Kampala (Uganda) in November, 2018.

Gabriel Camară

**THE FIFTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE  
Geographical Research and Cross-Border Cooperation,  
ROMANIA, CRAIOVA, SEPTEMBER 6–9, 2018**

The roots of the International Conference Geographical Research and Cross-Border Cooperation go back to the year 2000, when the University of Craiova organised the regional conference on Geographical environment and cross-border cooperation within the Danube Lower Basin, gathering geographers and other researchers from various European countries.

The FIFTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, with the sub-title Geographical Research and Cross-Border Cooperation, was held between 6 and 9 September, 2018 and was organized by University of Craiova Geography Department in collaboration with: Institute of Geography, Romanian Academy; St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia; Faculty of Geography, University of Belgrade; Geographical Institute Jovan Cvijic, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts; University of Szeged, University of Pécs; Faculty of Sciences, University of Novi Sad; Faculty of Geography, University of Bucharest; West University of Timișoara; Neofit Rilski South-West University; Romanian Geographical Society; ISS-Demographic Research Centre, Serbia.

The conference had three Plenary Sessions concentrated on issues as: Cross-border cooperation and research; Environment and sustainable development; Geography, education and EU policy; GIS, landscape analysis and planning; Hazards, risks and mitigation, land use and degradation, population change and challenges, local and regional development.

On September 7, 2018, a Ceremony of Awarding the Title of Doctor Honoris Causa to Academician Dan Bălțeanu (Director of the Institute of Geography, Romanian Academy), by the University of Craiova, took place. The event was held in Aula Mihai I of Romania in the presence of the Rector of the University of Craiova and other distinguished members of the academic world.

The Conference was attended by participants from several countries: Bulgaria, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, and Serbia, as well as from different research fields, such as geography, demography, regional studies, environmental studies, etc. Four papers were presented by authors from the Institute of Geography of the Romanian Academy: Danubius-RI. A Distributed Pan-European Research Infrastructure Supporting Interdisciplinary Research on River-Sea Systems (Nicolae Panin, Adrian Staniță, Manuela Sidoroff, Iulian Nichersu, Cătălina Iticescu, Crișan Demetrescu, Monica Dumitrascu, Bianca Mitrică); Is the Romanian Danube Valley a cohesive region? A geographical approach (Bianca Mitrică, Irena Mocanu, Monica Dumitrașcu, Ines Grigorescu, Nicoleta Damian); Landslide susceptibility assessment in the framework of land use/land cover scenarios in Romania (Dan Bălțeanu, Gheorghe Kucsicsa, Marta Jurchescu, Mihai Micu, Mihaela Sima); Past and future land use/cover flows related to agricultural lands in Romania. An assessment using CLUE-S model and Corine Land Cover Database (Popovici Elena-Ana, Grigorescu Ines, Kucsicsa Gheorghe, Bălțeanu Dan, Mitrică Bianca, Dumitrașcu Monica, Damian Nicoleta).

The Conference field trip (September 8), was organized in the Danube Gorge area and included visits to Iron Gates Hydroelectrical Power Plant, cruise along the Danube River and Severin Mediaeval Fortress.

The main goals of this scientific event were to provide a forum where participants can share information, ideas, scientific data and experiences, gain a better understanding of the problems, opportunities and challenges posed by cross-border cooperation and encourage cooperative efforts for further research ideas.

*Bianca Mitrică*

INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE  
Geographical science and education: from statement to constructivism,  
KIEV, UKRAINE, SEPTEMBER 28–29, 2018

On the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Establishment of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, a large scientific conference entitled “Geographic Science and Education: From State to Constructivism” has been organised in Kiev (Ukraine). This scientific event took place between 28 and 29 September 2018 under the auspices of the Institute of Geography of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine.

A large number of distinguished academics from Ukraine, Belarus, Republic of Moldova, USA and Romania gathered in Kiev in order to stress the importance of bridging scientific research and education, as well as highlighting the interdisciplinary and the transdisciplinary character of the geographical science.

Apart from the plenary talks, three Scientific Sessions unfolded during the Conference: *New concepts of modern geography and problems of development of post-industrial society; Geosystems and their transformation under the influence of antropogenic factor and Cartography; and GIS modeling in modern management decisions. Modern geographic education: challenges and opportunities*

At this prestigious event, two scientific works were presented by the authors from the Institute of Geography of the Romanian Academy: *Land use/cover change modelling and future urban sprawl in Romania. A comparative analysis of the development regions* (Ines Grigorescu, Gheorghe Kucsicsa, Ana Popovici, Bianca Mitrică, Irena Mocanu, Monica Dumitraşcu) and *An insight on the use of renewable energy resources in Romania: a multi-level territorial analysis* (Monica Dumitraşcu, Ines Grigorescu, Irena Mocanu, Bianca Mitrică, Gheorghe Kucsicsa, Cristina Dumitrică).

On September 29<sup>th</sup>, a field trip was organized in the south of Kiev region (Naddniprovyanshchyna, Pereiaslav-Khmelnytskyi), where the Conference participants were able to observe and analyse aspects related to the transformation and preservation of cultural landscapes, population structure and dynamics, as well as models of local governance.

*Gheorghe Kucsicsa*

International Scientific Conference SMART GEOGRAPHY: 100 years Bulgarian  
Geographical Society,  
SOFIA, BULGARIA, NOVEMBER 2-4, 2018

The celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Bulgarian Geographical Society was an occasion for retrospection and analysis of the development of geography in Bulgaria. It was, however, also a reason to look into the future and outline the prospects of the geographical science, education and practice. The 100 Years Bulgarian Geographical Society International Conference *Smart Geography*, was held between November 2-4, 2018 and was jointly organized by the Bulgarian Geographical Society, Faculty of Geology and Geography, Sofia University 'St. Kliment Ohridski', National Institute of Geophysics Geodesy and Geography, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. The conference unfolded under the auspices of Rumén Radev, President of the Republic of Bulgaria.

The foremost topics of this scientific event were related to: Physical Geography (Climatology, Hydrology, Geomorphology, Biogeography), Human Geography (Geodemography, Social Geography, Economic Geography), Geoinformation Science (GIS and Geospatial Science, Remote Sensing, Cartography and Cartographic Visualization), Interdisciplinary Studies (Landscape Ecology, Ecosystem Services, Urban and Regional Studies, Mountain Studies, Natural Hazards, Tourism, Water Values), Teaching and Education in Geography.

The Conference had three plenary sessions focused on the progress of Geographical Science towards Smart Geography worldwide: Global Europe, Economic Integration, and Regional Uneven Development; Restoring the Industrial City; Critical Remarks of Smart Geography; Mapping Ecosystem Services; Geographical Dimensions of Global Water Security Challenges; Disaster Risk Reduction; Environmental Change and Landslide Assessment etc.

The Conference was attended by a large number of participants from various countries (Algeria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Republic of Macedonia, Russian Federation, Serbia, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom and USA) and from different fields (e.g. geography, economy, sociology, regional studies, spatial planning, environmental studies). Five papers were presented by authors of the Institute of Geography of the Romanian Academy: *Environmental change and landslide assessment in the Subcarpathian hilly regions of Romania* (Dan Balteanu, Marta Jurchescu, Mihai Micu, Mihaela Sima, Gheorghe Kucsicsa); *The socio-economic assessment of drought phenomena. Vulnerability hotspots in Southern Romania* (Monica Dumitraşcu, Irena Mocanu, Bianca Mitrică, Ines Grigorescu, Carmen-Sofia Dragotă, Cristina Dumitrică); *Future urban growth related to land use/cover changes. Regional spatial and statistical analyses in Romania* (Ines Grigorescu, Gheorghe Kucsicsa, Ana Popovici, Bianca Mitrică, Irena Mocanu, Monica Dumitraşcu); *Social development and regional disparities in Romania. Urban vs. rural social disadvantaged areas* (Bianca Mitrică, Irena Mocanu, Ines Grigorescu, Paul Şerban, Nicoleta Damian, Monica Dumitraşcu); *Copper concentration in the soils of the Danube floodplain between the Timok River and the Vit River, Northwestern Bulgaria* (Velimira Stoyanova, Tsvetan Kotsev, Georgi Zhelezov, Ruben Kretzschmar, Kurt Barmettler, Mihaela Sima).

With this anniversary occasion, on behalf of the Romanian Geographical Society the diploma "Carol I of Romania" has been conferred to the Bulgarian Geographical Society. In turn, the Bulgarian Geographical Society awarded Academician Dan Bălteanu (already an Honorary Member of BGS) with the Medal of Honour.

Following the Conference, the field trips organized on November 4<sup>th</sup>, provided the possibility to discuss issues from all geographical and neighbour disciplines. Several options for getting to know better the Bulgarian landscape and culture were proposed: the Rila Monastery and Stob's pyramids; the Dragoman Marsh and Iskar River Gorge; and Topolnitsa Archeological Park, Chavdar and Koprivshtitsa Architectural and Historical Reserve.

*Ines Grigorescu*