



EUGEO workshops (Zara, Croatia, 25-27 September 2016)

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Abstract

From September 25th to 27th, 2016, EUGEO (the Association of Geographical Societies in Europe) sponsored a number of meetings and workshops in Zara (Croatia). It was the occasion to organise the next EUGEO conference, keep a study seminar hosting representatives of several European geographical societies and associations, and hold EUGEO's general assembly, while some Croatian geographers organised a scientific excursion along the Dalmatian coast.

Keywords: EUGEO, Geography in Europe, Geographic Education, Regional Studies

From September 25th to 27th, 2016, the Association of Geographical Societies in Europe (EUGEO) sponsored a number of meetings and workshops in the city of Zara, on the Dalmatian coast of Croatia. It was the occasion to organise the next EUGEO conference, keep a study seminar hosting representatives of several European geographical societies and associations, and hold EUGEO's general assembly, while the geographers of the University of Zara organised a scientific excursion along the Dalmatian coast. In particular, on September 25th the Croatian Geographical Society, which has recently joined the group of geographical societies and associations adhering to EUGEO, hosted the preliminary meeting for the forthcoming EUGEO conference to be held at the Palais des Académies in Brussels from September 4th to 6th, 2017. The EUGEO conference occurs every two years and

the one in Brussels will be the sixth in the history of the Association. The preliminary meeting for EUGEO 2017 was reserved to members of the Scientific Committee, headed by Prof. Christian Vandermotten of the "Société Royale Belge de Géographie". The Brussels conference next fall will focus on Geography for Europe: the theme will be approached in a number of work sessions, each dealing with specific geographical themes and issues as highlighted in the call for paper circulated by EUGEO's organising committee in the past few months (see <https://eugeo2017.sciencesconf.org/> for more informations).

As can be seen, these issues cover several aspects of Europe's geography, the contribution of geography to the building of Europe, and the problems the "old continent" has to face. The Zara meeting also praised the success of the last

EUGEO, held in Budapest in 2015, confirming the good practice of organizing the conference on a biennial basis and alternating it with a seminar and an assembly in the years in which the conference is not held. In this way, the sessions will be organized around topics like the urban and rural geography, the cultural geography, population mobility and migrations, the socio-political and territorial problems and disparities, the old and new nationalism, transport and accessibility, etc.

During the meeting we discussed about main topics in view of the next seminar and general assembly of EUGEO.

On September 26th, after the greetings of EUGEO's president, prof. Henk Ottens of the Royal Dutch Geographical Society, and prof. Ana Pejdo of the Croatian Geographical Society (SGC), the seminar's work sessions began with a plenary lecture on Croatia's physical and anthropic geography.

Prof. Damir Magaš, first SGC president and specialist on the Geography of Croatia, presented an interesting reading of Croatian space, environment and territory, highlighting its main and more noteworthy aspects, teaching potentials which university lecturers can draw on to implement new approaches and a few innovative research tracks. Four interactive workshops followed, seeing the participation of the several geographical societies in Europe. EUGEO workshops are small-scale events with the aim to communicate and discuss issues of key importance to Geographical Societies and Associations in Europe. Coordinated by professors Henk Ottens and Massimiliano Tabusi (Eugeo Secretary General), the first workshop concerned the International Charter on Geography Education. It has been emphasized that this document is specifically addressed to policy makers, education leaders, curriculum planners and geography educators to counteract geographical illiteracy; the second workshop, held by Ana Pejdo, dealt with the management and possible developments of national and regional school curricula of geography; the third workshop, coordinated by prof. Oana Ramona Ilovan of the Romanian Geographical Society, dealt with the sensitive issue of territorial identity in Europe; the fourth one, coordinated by Henk Ottens, discussed a few practices and a variety of experiences carried out

by a few European geographical societies. Frances Fahy and Kathy Reilly have related about Experiences with the Geographical Awareness Week in Ireland; Antoine Leblanc has shown New geographical initiatives in France to support bi-national forms of cooperation; Ana Pejdo has outlined Challenges of a Young Geographical Society in Croatia; Henk Ottens and Eelko Postma have presented the new website for a broad audience in The Netherlands. The hard task to sum up the seminar's work sessions and outline a few disciplinary issues for future analysis was given to prof. Tabusi. EUGEO's general assembly closed the intense day of work. During the meeting it has been rapidly reminded what was stated in the latest Budapest EUGEO Conference, and an outline of the revised Statute has been handed out so as to submit it to the general approbation. The revisions of the Statute have been approved unanimously. The 2015 Annual Report has been presented and handed out, and the Activities and Policies scheduled for 2016-2019 have been also reminded. The analysis of the financial prospect has been very articulated: both 2015 Income and Expenses and 2014-2015 Balance Sheet have been presented; the 2016-2019 budget has also been discussed. As to the composition of the Executive Committee it has been mentioned that Professors Zoltan Kovács (member), Massimiliano Tabusi (Secretary) and Christian Vandermotten (member) have completed the first year of their second term and that the election of the new EUGEO president (now Professor Henk Ottens) will take place during the next Conference in Brussels (September 2017). EUGEO is looking for one or two new Executive Committee members and EUGEO is kindly requested by the current board to locate people interested in presenting themselves as candidates.

The scientific excursion took place on September 27th, along a stretch of the Dalmatian coast north of Zara. It was led by several geographers from the University of Zara who highlighted the natural and anthropic elements of that part of Dalmatia.