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2015



**CONGRESS
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**CONGRESS
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HUNGARIAN
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**Dear EUGEO 2015
delegates,**

On behalf of the Executive Committee of the European Association of Geographical Societies, a very warm welcome for all of you to the EUGEO 2015 congress! I hope, in fact I am quite sure, that your participation in this event will be both useful and enjoyable. The biennial EUGEO congresses have attained a solid position among the major Geography events in Europe. After its successful predecessors in Amsterdam (2007), Bratislava (2009), London (2011), and Rome (2013), this fifth version of a scientific gathering of the Geographical Societies and Associations in Europe again promises to become a congress to be remembered. Budapest appears to be another of those attractive European capital cities worth visiting for a major meeting. EUGEO congresses are, in the meantime by tradition, affordable and friendly to young, early career geographers.

EUGEO 2015 takes place in a period of tension, uncertainty and warfare, both within and at the borders of Europe. Political Geography, in particular European geopolitics and financial geographies, rightly have been given a prominent place among the themes to be presented and discussed in the Hungarian capital.

Space-time dynamics are at the heart of geographical inquiry, and geographers should continue to give priority to closely monitor and interpret these dynamics. Many sessions are devoted to this theme. Vulnerability of and hazards in the natural environment, often related to climate change and sustainability of resources, are more medium to long-term issues central to physical and environmental geographical researchers and practitioners.

Finally, Geoinformation Science, probably to the surprise of quite some geographers, continues to be a thriving interdisciplinary field and business opportunity that needs substantial geographic input and the new data and methods that are developed should be exploited in geographical research and applications.

The Budapest Congress is made possible by EUGEO member the Hungarian Geographical Society, together with the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Eötvös Loránd University. We also thank the main sponsors: the Pallas Athena Geopolitical Foundation PAGEO, Esri GIS Mapping Software and the City of Budapest, for their generous support. Many people worked and are working hard to make EUGEO possible and successful: the Steering Committee, the Congress Secretariat and all others that you will see working for the congress in Budapest. Have a great congress and time along the Blue Danube!

Henk Ottens,
EUGEO President



**Dear Geographers,
honoured guests,**

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you to the 5th EUGEO Congress in Budapest on behalf of the Hungarian geographical community. EUGEO, as a network and forum for the geographical societies in Europe launched its biennial congresses in Amsterdam in 2007. After Bratislava (2009), London (2011) and Rome (2013) this is the fifth EUGEO congress in the series, with over six hundred delegates from 45 countries. The number of participants and the diversity of sessions have greatly increased since 2007 reflecting the growing demand of geographers for this Pan-European academic meeting and the success of the original idea.

As the final programme demonstrates, geographers seek to find answers to a growing number of problems affecting humankind. The motto of the present congress „Convergences and Divergences of Geography in Europe” reflects the way in which our discipline has developed in the recent past. The mushrooming of new research topics, the far-reaching specialisations and not least the strengthening cooperation between geographers and representatives of other disciplines all loosened up the traditional boundaries of geography. Is divergence pervasive within our discipline or does it go hand in hand with certain tendencies of convergence among various sub-disciplines, countries and schools? I sincerely hope this congress will shed light on some of these questions.

The only major international geographical conference to be held in Hungary was the IGU regional conference in 1971. Since then the Iron Curtain was lifted, old boundaries were dismantled in Europe, and a new generation of geographers has grown up. These young scholars are prominent amongst the participants at this conference, thanks to the endeavour of EUGEO founding fathers to make the biennial congresses easily accessible for young geographers. I think this could be a good starting point for the success of this congress, in addition to the carefully constructed paper and poster sessions, stimulating keynote lectures, field excursions and social events during the three days ahead. On behalf of the local Organising Committee and all those who have contributed to the organisation of this congress I warmly welcome you to Hungary and to Budapest! As we say in Hungary: Isten hozta!

Zoltán Kovács
Vice-President, Hungarian Geographical Society
Chair of the Organising Committee

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