

XIIth International ProGEO Symposium

Celebrating Geological Heritage and Geoparks

30th September - 2nd October 2025,
Tulcea, Romania

2nd Circular



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Welcome

The International Association for the Conservation of Geological Heritage (ProGEO), the National Institute of Marine Geology and Geoecology (GeoEcoMar), the University of Bucharest, Gavrilă Simion Eco-Museum Research Institute (ICEM) and the Cimmerian Dobrogea Geopark are pleased to invite you to participate in the XIIth International ProGEO Symposium that will be held in Tulcea and Cimmerian Dobrogea Geopark, from 30th of September to 2nd of October 2025.

The Cimmerian Dobrogea Geopark has a unique geological and natural heritage and cultural values that make it exceptional at international level.

Venue



The Symposium will be held in the City of Tulcea, the administrative center of Tulcea County and port on the Lower Danube. It is the main gateway to the Danube Delta and one of the gates to the Cimmerian Dobrogea Geopark. Tulcea is built on seven hills on the right bank of the Danube. It was founded in the 4th century BC under the name of Aegyssus, a name of Celtic origin derived from its legendary founder, Caspius Aegyssos. The city represented a strategic location especially during the



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Roman times, and at the beginning of the 2nd century AD, it was included in the Moesian defensive frontier system (Danubian Limes) as a military fort and port. Tulcea was first documented under its modern name in 1506 in Ottoman customs records, as an important center for the transit trade. In 1878, after the end of the Russo-Turkish war, Tulcea became part of Romania along with the rest of Dobrogea.

The official opening of the symposium will be held in the Mihail Kogălniceanu Conference Room of the Tulcea County Council. The scientific sessions will be held at the Hotel Delta. This hotel is situated on the Danube embankment, in the city center.

For more information regarding Tulcea's accommodation, restaurants, coffee shops, pubs, a touristic map and more can be found in the **Tu si Tulcea** application that can be installed both on Android and IOS devices, from Play Store and App Store.

Meeting Outline

The meeting will include three days of Symposium, social events and Field trips:

29 th September Monday	30 th September Tuesday	1 st October Wednesday	2 nd October Thursday	3-5 October Friday-Sunday
Pre-Symposium Field Trip (optional)	Opening Ceremony & Keynote talks	Scientific sessions	Scientific sessions	Post-Symposium Field Trip (optional)
	Scientific sessions		ProGEO General Assembly	
Icebreaker Party		Mid-Symposium Field Trip	Symposium Dinner (optional)	



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The meeting will include invited keynote talks, regular session talks and posters. Poster presenters will have 2 minutes to explain their work during the poster sessions. We expect to announce the keynote speakers on our website soon.

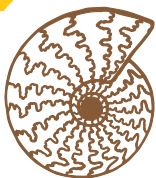
During the Symposium, awards will be given to students for the best oral and poster presentations.

The mid-Symposium half-day field trip to the Agighiol geological reserve is included in the Registration for all delegates.

The Cimmerian Dobrogea Geopark

Our Geopark area is an eroded plateau with a protracted geological history that began in the Late Neoproterozoic. The Geopark territory includes two main geotectonic units, the Moesian Platform to the South, and the Cimmerian Orogen of North Dobrogea to the North, separated by a major crustal fault. Both these units are unconformably overlain by Late Cretaceous shallow marine clastics, connected to the formation of the West Black Sea Basin. In the Geopark area, the Ediacaran basement of the Moesian Platform consists largely of turbidites, with well-preserved sedimentary and sometimes biogenic structures. By contrast, the Cimmerian belt shows a very complex geology and structure, with Variscan roots exposed in the cores of Triassic anticlines.

The landscape of Dobrogea is very picturesque, with low altitude hills, isolated or forming elongated ridges. Many of them are covered in steppe vegetation, but there are also large areas topped by forests. The biodiversity is extremely rich, with habitats and species included in a network of 10 Natura 2000 sites, and 29 nature reserves, one of them a national park. The Geopark territory is mainly rural, and despite the increasing number of modern constructions, traditional houses, stone fences and old fountains are still preserved in some villages. Older monasteries are hidden in the woods, while a large number of churches of various religious cults are historical monuments. Archaeological sites are found everywhere, proof of human habitation in the area since the Paleolithic. The most important of these sites are fortresses and fortifications of the Moesian Limes, the fortified border of the Roman Empire.



Danube Delta

The Danube Delta is the second largest delta in Europe (after the Volga Delta) and represents the natural interface between the vast drainage area of the Danube River and the Black Sea receiving basin, into which it flows through three main branches – Chilia, Sulina and Sf. Gheorghe. One of the largest and most important wetlands of the continent, it is characterized by exceptional biodiversity (more than 1800 species of flora and over 3500 species of fauna, of which the birds – about 320 species – represent one of the main attractions of the Delta). Together with the Razim-Sinoie Lagoon Complex area, located in the south, the Danube Delta was designated a "Biosphere Reserve" (1990), then included in the category of "Wetland of International Importance" (RAMSAR Convention, 1991) and in the List of the "World Natural Heritage" (UNESCO, 1991), subsequently being protected by a special national directive (1993).

The total area of the Biosphere Reserve is approximately 5,800 km², while the delta itself – the area between its three arms – represents almost 3,000 km². The aquatic system of the Danube Delta includes over 3,500 km of natural and artificial channels, and more than 450 lakes, ponds and swamps, interconnected in a very complex hydrographic network, which constitutes a huge complex of flowing and stagnant aquatic ecosystems, which mutually influence each other and interact closely with terrestrial ecosystems in areas not covered by water.

The delta is made of two major units – the fluvial delta (upper delta plain) and the fluvio-marine delta (lower delta plain), separated by the so-called initial spit, consisting of numerous juxtaposed sandy beach ridges. In the emerged areas, these ridges are highlighted by spectacular sand dune fields upon which a specific vegetation is fixed. This sand dune complexes host the famous Letea and Caraorman Forest.



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Registration

The ProGEO members will have preferential rates for the Registration fee. It is always cheaper to join ProGEO and secure the discount rate, than pay the non-member rate. Information on membership payments will be soon available on the ProGEO website www.progeo.ngo

Registration can be made via the website at www.progeo2025.com. Payments can be made directly on-line through Symposium website, and all major credit and debit cards are accepted. These low prices have been possible due to the financial support from the sponsors.

	Early Bird Registration (until 31 May)	Registration (1 June – 31 July)	Late Registration (after 1 August)
ProGEO & GSA* Member	120 €	170 €	230 €
Non-Member	240 €	340 €	460 €
Students	80 €	100 €	120 €
Accompanying person	120 €	170 €	230 €
Symposium Dinner	50 €		
Pre-symposium field trip	85 €		
Post-symposium field trip	270 €		

*The Geological Society of America (GSA) members will have the same discount as the ProGEO members. If a person is a member of both ProGEO and GSA, the discounts are not cumulative.

The registration fee covers:

- Symposium abstracts volume and other materials;
- Ice-breaker party;
- Lunches;
- Coffee breaks and refreshments;
- Three days of scientific sessions, including talks and poster sessions
- Keynote Lecturers
- An afternoon mid-Symposium field trip to visit Agighiol Geological reserve, the Aegyssus fortress and the Tulcea History and Archaeology Museum.



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Social Events

On Monday 29th September, all the delegates are invited to the Icebreaker Party that will be held at the Avramide House – the House of Collections of the "Gavrilă Simion" Eco-Museum Research Institute Tulcea. The evening starts with visiting the art galleries of Avramide House and continues with tasting local drinks and traditional snacks.

On the evening of Thursday 2nd October, we propose you a special dinner at the Select Restaurant. Guests will have the opportunity to taste traditional fish-based dishes from the Danube Delta, try Dobrogea wines and attend a traditional dance performance. We encourage you to book alongside the registration.

Pre-symposium Field Trip

The Danube Delta

Monday, 29 September, 2025

Convener: Silviu Rădan, senior researcher National Institute of Marine Geology and Geoecology – GeoEcoMar Bucharest, specialist in sedimentology, marine and environmental ecology, with decades of experience in the study of the Danube Delta.

Departure from Tulcea in the morning and return in the evening.

Fee: 85 Euro

The fee includes the cost of boats, cart transport to the Holocene sand dunes, paid entrances, English-speaking guided tours, lunch, and refreshments. We recommend delegates on this field trip arrange accommodation in Tulcea for the night before the field trip – accommodation is not included in the field trip fee.

Participants: Maximum number 60.

Programme:

Our excursion is made aboard a tourist ship that will cross the delta from west to east, starting from Tulcea (city located near the apex of the



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delta), to Sulina, in the area where the Danube meets the Black Sea. Participants will board the ship from the „Select Tours” pontoon in the Tulcea Port, on the “Ivan Patzaichin” promenade near the Delta Hotel.

After traveling about 5.6 km downstream, the ship enters the Mila 36 canal (an artificial channel that connects with the Chilia Arm). After a few km, in the Sireasa area, we enter Gârla Şontea, a natural and fairly long channel, along which we can observe the rich vegetation and fauna specific to the delta (especially birds). We change direction slightly to the south and cross the Lake Fortuna, one of the most beautiful and exotic lakes of the delta, then a new change of direction, north, towards the lakes Văcaru and Lighianca. Once crossing these lakes, we reach Mila 23 – a charming fishing village located on the right bank of one of the old meanders of the Sulina Branch. *Mila 23* is the birthplace of our famous kayak champion Ivan Patzaichin. In May 2024, the Museum Ivan Patzaichin – Community Innovation Center was opened here. After a short stop at *Mila 23*, we head northward, through the Eracle Canal and then along Gârla Lopatna, a natural, meandering and particularly picturesque channel, from which we enter Lake Matîţa and then northeastward into Lake Merhei. Given that in the vicinity, to the north, the strictly protected area of Roşca – Buhaiova is located, which shelters one of the largest pelican reserves, it is very likely that we will encounter large groups of pelicans in the Lopatna-Matîţa-Merhei area as well. Once we leave Lake Merhei to the east, the crossing of the upper delta plain (fluvial delta) is completed.

The route continues along the artificial Sidor canal, which crosses the dunes formed on the sandy beach ridges of the Letea marine levee, part of the initial spit, to the village of Letea. Here we will take a trip to the famous Letea forest and sand dunes, a strictly protected area, which includes numerous special floristic and faunal elements (Balkan, Mediterranean, subtropical, steppe), with a special landscape value. Letea Forest is one of the oldest natural reserves in Romania (1938). In the surroundings, there are chances to meet the famous wild horses of Letea. The visit to the forest is done together with the locals, by car or, traditionally, by horse-drawn cart. After this “safari” we’ll have a hearty traditional meal. From Letea we continue towards Sulina on the canals, with a detour to Musura Bay (on the border with Ukraine), where we can see the cargo ship *TURGUT S*, shipwrecked in 2009, then, weather permitting,



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we continue into the Black Sea. From the sea we enter the Danube on the Sulina Branch, we pass by the new lighthouse and arrive at Sulina town, the easternmost city of Romania. For an hour we can visit the city, or relax on a terrace with a refreshing drink. In Sulina, there are several historical sites, such as the Old Lighthouse, built in 1802 by the Ottoman authorities and turned into a museum in 2003, as well as the former palace of the European Danube Commission (CED), built in 1866. The Commission operated between 1856 and 1938 and, among other achievements, initiated and coordinated the works to improve and systematize navigation on the Sulina Branch. Thus, between 1862 and 1902, 10 cuts were made on the Sulina Branch, which allowed the route between Tulcea and the Black Sea to be shortened by 249 km and a minimum depth of 5.48 m to be ensured. The works were coordinated by Sir Charles Hartley, who was the chief engineer of the CED between 1856 and 1871. After this year and until his death in 1905, he was a consultant on river and maritime navigation issues. In 2016, a bust of him was installed in front of the former headquarters of the CED.

Our ship returns to Tulcea on the Sulina arm, passing by the villages of Crişan, Gorgova, Maliuc, Vultură and Partizani.

Mid-symposium Field Trip

Wednesday, 1 October, 2025

Conveners: Iuliana Lazăr, professor of Palaeontology and Palaeozoology, Faculty of Geology and Geophysics, University of Bucharest; Antoneta Seghedi, senior researcher National Institute of Marine Geology and Geoecology – GeoEcoMar, Bucharest, Cimmerian Dobrogea Geopark initiative group; Aurel Daniel Stănică, senior researcher, preventive archaeology/medieval archaeology, „Gavrilă Simion” Eco-Museum Research Institute, Tulcea.

Included in the Registration fee

The mid-symposium trip includes a visit to the Agighiol geological reserve with Triassic ammonoids. This is followed by a visit to the ruins of Aegyssus fortress and the Museum of History and Archaeology, both located on the Monument Hill in Tulcea, on Induan fanglomerates. The museum hosts treasures and artefacts found in the Tulcea County.



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At the top of the hill, the Monument of Independence, built after the Russo-Turkish War (1877-1878), is one of the major attractions in Tulcea. This place offers panoramic views of the city, of the western part of the Delta and the north-eastern part of North Dobrogea.

Post-symposium Field Trip

Geosites, nature reserves and archaeological sites of the Cimmerian Dobrogea Geopark

Friday 3rd – Sunday 5th October, 2025

Conveners: Antoneta Seghedi, senior researcher National Institute of Marine Geology and Geoecology – GeoEcoMar, Bucharest, Cimmerian Dobrogea Geopark initiative group; Iuliana Lazăr, professor of Palaeontology and Palaeozoology, Faculty of Geology and Geophysics, University of Bucharest; Silviu Rădan, senior researcher GeoEcoMar Bucharest, specialized in sedimentology, marine and environmental ecology; Aurel Daniel Stănică, senior researcher, preventive archaeology/medieval archaeology, „Gavrilă Simion” Eco-Museum Research Institute, Tulcea; Mihaela Iacob, archaeologist, protection of cultural heritage, lecturer „Lower Danube” University, Galați, Cimmerian Dobrogea Geopark initiative group.

The territory of the Cimmerian Dobrogea Geopark includes two main geotectonic units, the Cimmerian Orogen of North Dobrogea (in the North), separated by Peceneaga-Camena Fault from the Moesian Platform (to the South). Late Cretaceous shallow marine successions (“Babadag Basin”) unconformably overlay both these major units. North of the Cimmerian Orogen lies the concealed Scythian Platform, which is the basement of the Danube Delta. The Cimmerian belt shows a complex geology and structure, with folds and thrust-folds exposing Variscan roots in cores of Triassic anticlines. The Măcin Unit, in the west (consisting of amphibolite to greenschist facies metamorphic rocks, very-low grade Silurian to Permo-Carboniferous deposits and granitoid intrusions) is thrust over the eastern units with Triassic deposits along the Luncavița-Consul Fault. Deep marine Silurian – Devonian formations are discontinuously exposed in the core of the E-W trending Tulcea-Mahmudia anticline



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along the Danube. The Triassic-Jurassic successions crop out mainly east and north-east of the Luncavița-Consul Fault.

In the Geopark area, the Ediacaran basement of the Moesian Platform consists largely of turbidites, with well-preserved sedimentary and sometimes biogenic structures.

In the first day we will visit geosites in the Măcin Unit, the second day is dedicated to the Triassic-Jurassic formations, and the third day we will travel to the Ediacaran basement. As archaeological sites and historical monuments are found everywhere, some of them are included in the field trip route.

Departure from Tulcea each morning and return in the evening.

Fee: 270 Euro

The fees include the price for coach travel, paid entrances, English-speaking guided tours, lunch, dinner, and refreshments. We recommend delegates on this field trip arrange accommodation in Tulcea for the nights before, during and after the field trip – accommodation is not included in the field trip fee.

Participants: Maximum number 40. The field trip ends Sunday, 5th of October, 2025, at approx. 18:30. Transfer to Bucharest during the night or in the morning of 6th October.

Programme:

Cimmerian Dobrogea Geopark, an introduction to the geological and cultural heritage of the North Dobrogea Orogen and the Ediacaran basement of the Moesian Platform in Central Dobrogea. Localities include:

Hora Tepe (Monument Hill), Tulcea, Lowermost Triassic (Induan, earlier Werfenian) fanglomerates overlying Devonian siliceous shales along a faulted contact. The Devonian deposits show a penetrative slaty cleavage and are intruded by a dyke of trachytes (ascribed to the Late Permian).

Noviodunum, a Roman-byzantine fortress of the Danube limes (fortified border) superimposed by an Ottoman fortification (tabia).



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Revărsarea quarry, pillow basalts with rare interbeds of Lower-Middle Triassic limestones.

Consul Hill section, showing the structure of the Consul unit, with three successive thrust folds involving Olenekian (Spathian) limestone turbidites and ignimbritic rhyolites, overthrusting the Alba sandstones (Late Carnian-Norian terrigenous turbidites). Roman fortifications are also visible along the northeastern side of the hill.

Nalbant village, outcrops along a small creek, the type locality of Nalbant Formation (Lower Jurassic turbidites).

Cataloi, the type locality of Cataloi marls with Halobia, Upper Anisian (lower Illyrian) – Rhaetian.

Poșta sandstones, South of Posta village, Lower Jurassic sandstones rich in the trace fossil *Zoophycos*. Their Hettangian-Lower Pliensbachian age is established based on ammonite zones Jamesoni and Ibex.

Crapcea and Amzalar Hills, volcano-sedimentary and alluvial plain successions in the continental Carapelit formation (Lower Carboniferous-Early Permian).

Mircea Vodă, remnants of a palaeoweathering crust on top of metamorphic rocks below Cenomanian detrital limestones.

Priopcea section, tectonic contact of Megina amphibolites and Priopcea quartzites with the Silurian deposits.

Troesmis, an important archaeological site situated on the steep right bank of the Danube, built in a strategic key position on the Roman Danube limes. The Roman-Byzantine settlement includes visible ruins of two fortifications (the eastern fortification, dating from the Late Roman period, and the western fortification, dated to the middle Byzantine period).

Cape Iglița, a geosite showing upright Variscan folds in a multilayered succession of Lower Devonian calcarenites and shales.

Cape Orliga, largely metaterrigenous succession of Orliga Group showing a Late Carboniferous-Early Permian amphibolite facies metamorphism.



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The exposures show complex deformation, with recumbent isoclinal folds in garnet-kyanite micaschists and quartzites, refolded by steeply dipping folds of the metamorphic foliation.

Bal Bair, a hill west of Caugagia, is the type locality of Caugagia member (Lower Coniacian) of the Dolojman Formation, rich in the bivalve *Inoceramus*.

Slava Rusă village, with (L)Ibida Roman Bizantine city, built from Upper Cretaceous calcarenites.

Casimcea nature reserve, *Aspidella* and trace fossils in Ediacaran turbidites.

Tariverde valley, spectacular ripple marks on large slabs of Ediacaran turbidites; also wrinkle type structures.

Piatra village, beautifully preserved sedimentary structures on bedding surfaces, *Beltanelliformis* and enigmatic traces in Ediacaran turbidites.

Enisala medieval fortress (built by the Genovese as Heracleea), view over the North Dobrogea orogen.

Abstract Submission

We welcome abstract submissions on various topics of the broad themes of geoheritage management, geoheritage and mining heritage, geoheritage and cultural heritage, movable geoheritage, geoconservation and geoparks, including methodologies, site management, interpretation, education and good practices.

Deadline for Abstract Submission: 10 June 2025 23:59 EST (GMT+2).

Each registered delegate can submit two abstracts as the presenting author. Talks will be 12 minutes in length, with 3 minutes for questions. Posters should be presented in A0 portrait format.

Abstract submission is through the website: www.progeo2025.com.



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Travel Support Fund

The Travel Support Fund has been made possible by the considerable financial support put in place by the ProGEO Executive Committee.

The Travel Support Fund is open to early career workers, and participants from low- and middle-income countries. Applicants must submit an abstract for presentation to be considered. The decision to award travel support grants will be based on the quality of the proposed presentation, and the evaluation of the need for financial assistance. The Organizing Committee may also award registration fee waivers. Presenting authors should endeavor to secure other funding also, as it is unlikely that ProGEO Travel Support Grants will cover the entire cost of attending the meeting.

We define an early career worker as someone who completed their most recent formal education (high school, college, BSc, MSc, or PhD) within the past 7 years. This period of 7 years excludes any period of career break, e.g., family care or for health reasons. We define low- and middle-income countries as those within the Low Income, Lower Middle Income, or Upper Middle Income Country categories of the World Bank's classification system.

To apply, participants should submit an abstract via the abstract submission form and to mention the intention of accessing the Travel Support Fund. Applicants to the fund must have their abstract submitted by the earlier deadline of 23:59 EST (GMT+2) April 30th, 2025. These abstracts will then go through an early round of peer review with the Scientific Committee. The outcome of this process will be announced as quickly as possible so that participants are aware if their abstract has been accepted, and what Travel Support might have been offered. Our hope is that by holding this process earlier in the year, those who secure a grant can book their travel and accommodation as early as possible.



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Key Dates

15 February 2025 Opening of Registration and Abstract Submission
10 March 2025 2 nd Circular
31 May 2025 23:59 EST (GMT+2) Early-bird Registration Closes
1 June – 31 July 2025 23:59 EST (GMT+2) Regular Registration
10 June 2025 23:59 EST (GMT+2) Abstract Submission Closes
25 June 2025 23:59 EST (GMT+2) Abstract decisions
1 August – 15 September 2025 Late Registration
15 September 2025 23:59 EST (GMT+2) Registration Closes
15 September 2025 3 rd Circular
29 September 2025 Pre-Symposium Field Trip (optional)
30 September – 2 October 2025 XII ProGEO International Symposium
2 October 2025 ProGEO General Assembly
3-5 October 2025 Post-Symposium Field Trip (optional)

Accommodation

We negotiated special fees for the Symposium participants and strongly advise you to book rooms at Hotel Delta (which has two wings, 3 and 4 stars) by contacting the hotel directly at the address hoteldeltatulcea@gmail.com. In order to qualify for the discounted fees, it is necessary to specify the participation in the ProGEO Symposium, both in the mail subject and in the mail body. For this particular booking the payment can be made only upon arrival at the hotel front desk, either cash or credit card.

Hotel Delta	3 stars	4 stars
Single room	49 €	65 €
Double room	56 €	76 €



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We strongly recommend delegates to book accommodation at the earliest opportunity – there is limited availability in Hotel Delta.

The prices include breakfast, local taxes, Wi-Fi, access to SPA (sauna, jacuzzi, fitness, pool). If you want to take advantage of these facilities, we encourage you to take your bathing suit.

Tulcea also has a number of larger and smaller hotels, situated quite close to the center. More details on accommodation will be available soon on the symposium website, www.progeo2025.com.

Getting Here

The best way to travel to Tulcea from Bucharest Henri Coanda International Airport (Otopeni) is by taking a Kirvad Bus. We recommend to book your bus once you have the airplane tickets, and please leave at least 1 hour between airplane landing and the bus scheduled departure time. For detailed bus schedule and on-line booking please consult <https://kirvad.ro/tulcea-otopeni/>

The Kirvad website is bilingual, except the online ticket forms. If you have difficulties filling these forms, please let us know and we will provide translations of the terms.

More information on transport links to Tulcea from the Henri Coandă International Airport and a time-table of shuttles can be found on the Symposium web-site www.progeo2025.com.

Passports and Visas

Romania is in the European Union and traveling between EU countries can be made without passport, only with ID card. For more information regarding Visas please visit this link: <https://www.mae.ro/en/node/2035>.



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Currency and Exchange

The national currency in Romania is Leu (RON). 1 EUR is approx. 5 RON. We don't recommend to exchange money at the airport due to very inconvenient exchange rates. There are many banks and currency exchange offices in Romania. All major credit cards are accepted and can be used to pay for virtually anything. ATM/Bank machines are found in all banks and many other locations throughout the country.

International Scientific Committee

(in alphabetical order)

Fadil Bajraktari

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Republic of Kosovo

Cristian Ciobanu

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National Organizing Committee

Chair:

Alexandru Andrășanu

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Andrei Briceag

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Andrei Gabriel Dragoș

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Silviu Rădan

Mid-symposium field trip:

Iuliana Lazăr

Antoneta Seghedi

Aurel-Daniel Stănică

Post-symposium field trip:

Antoneta Seghedi

Field trip co-leaders:

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Mihaela Iacob