# IGU Commission on Local and Regional Development



### Report 2024

The Commission on Local and Regional Development IGU is a dedicated group of scholars aiming to advance international knowledge of a variety of issues concerning local and regional development. The Commission's activities involve cooperation between scientists representing academic centres from different parts of the world, organizing meetings and expanding its intellectual network through academic conferences, publications, newsletters and its website. The basic mission is to advance international research and knowledge in a variety of domains concerning local and regional development through: 1) the development and dissemination of theoretical, conceptual and methodological frameworks concerning local and regional development, 2) the discussion of wide range of empirical and policy issues, 3) to widen of the scope of the debate on the topics of "local and regional development" in different national and institutional contexts.

### A. MEMBERSHIP

### 1. Steering Committee members

### 1.1. Chairperson of the Commission

**Ines Grigorescu**, PhD, Institute of Geography, Romanian Academy, ROMANIA, <a href="mailto:inesgrigorescu@yahoo.com">inesgrigorescu@yahoo.com</a>;

#### 1.2. Vice Chair

**Carmen Vázquez Varela,** Professor, Department of Geography and Spatial Planning, University de Castilla-La Mancha, Avda. de los Alfares, 44 – 16002 Cuenca, ESPANIA, +34 969179100, carmen.vazquez@uclm.es;

### 1.3. Scientific Secretary

**Bianca Mitrică,** PhD, Institute of Geography, Romanian Academy, ROMANIA, biancadumitrescu78@yahoo.com

### 1.4. Steering Committee Members

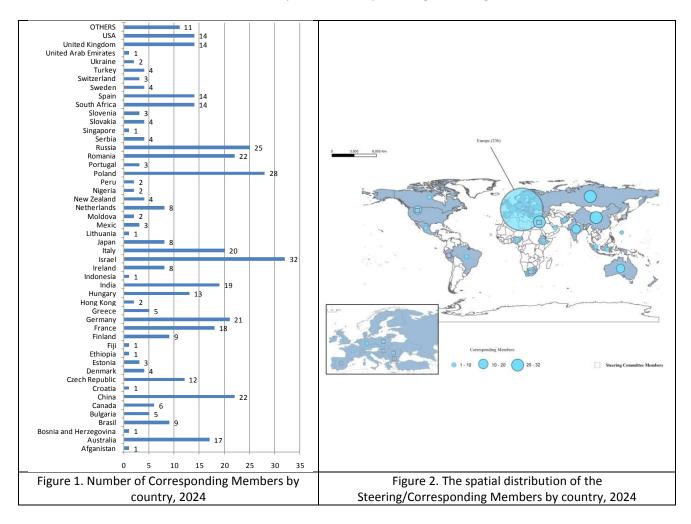
Before the IGU Dublin Congress	After the IGU Dublin Congress			
■ Ashley Gunter, Professor, Department of	■ <b>Ashley Gunter</b> , Professor, Department of			
Geography, University of South Africa, Building	Geography, University of South Africa, Building			
Calabash, +27 011 471 3390, Pretoria, SOUTH	Calabash, +27 011 471 3390, Pretoria, SOUTH			
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■ Boian Koulov, PhD, National Institute for	■ <b>Boian Koulov</b> , PhD, National Institute for			
Geophysics, Geodesy, and Geography, Bulgarian	Geophysics, Geodesy, and Geography, Bulgarian			
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bkoulov@gmail.com	bkoulov@gmail.com			
Benjamin Ofori-Amoah, Professor, Department of	■ Benjamin Ofori-Amoah, Professor, Department of			
Geography, Western Michigan University, 1903	Geography, Western Michigan University, 1903 West			
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269-387-3424, USA, ben.ofori@wmich.edu;	387-3424, USA, ben.ofori@wmich.edu;			
Ana Sabogal Dunin Borkowski, Professor,	Ana Sabogal Dunin Borkowski, Professor,			
Department of Humanities - Geography and Environment Section, Pontifical Catholic University	Department of Humanities - Geography and			
of Peru, 1801 Universitaria Avenue, San Miguel,	•			
15088, Lima, PERÚ, <u>bsabogal@pucp.edu.pe</u> ;	15088, Lima, PERÚ, <u>bsabogal@pucp.edu.pe</u> ;			
■ Michał Konopski, PhD, Institute of Geography and	Michał Konopski, PhD, Institute of Geography and			
Spatial Organization, Polish Academy of Sciences,	Spatial Organization, Polish Academy of Sciences,			
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Atsushi Taira, Faculty of Education, Kagawa	■ Yasuhisa ABE, Professor, Kyushu University, 744			
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u.ac.jp;				
■ Eberhard Weber, School of Geography, Earth	■ Tamás Hardi, HUN-REN Centre for Economic and			
Science and Environment, The University of the	Regional Studies, Institute for Regional Studies, West			
South Pacific, Laucala Campus, Suva, FIJI, (+679) 323	Hungarian Research Department, 9022 Győr, Liszt			
2542, weber_e@usp.ac.fj;	Ferenc str. 10, Hungary, +36 96 516-570,			
	<u>hardi.tamas@krtk.hun-ren.hu</u>			

### **1.5.** Honorary Members

- Michael Sofer, Department of Geography and Environment, Faculty of Social Sciences, Bar-Ilan University, 52900, +972-3-531-8773, Ramat-Gan, ISRAEL, soferm1@mail.biu.ac.il;
- Jerzy Bański, Institute of Geography and Spatial Organization, Polish Academy of Sciences, Twarda str. 51/55, +48 602391453, 00-818 Warszawa, POLAND, jbanski@twarda.pan.pl;

### 2. Corresponding Members

Currently, the Commission on Local and Regional Development counts a total of 432 members from 50 countries (Fig. 1). Based on the estimation of the Members of the Steering Committee, about 70-80 members are considered highly active in the sense that they participate in the meetings organized by the Commission, the sessions within the events organized by the IGU, contribute with articles/chapters in the volumes and special issues of the Commission or of the IGU, etc. However, all members are regularly informed about all the events organized by IGU or related to it. A lower participation of countries from the Global South is still maintained, a situation that we are trying to improve in the coming years. In 2024, the Commission expanded by 71 members. Overall, most members are from Israel (32), followed by Poland (28), Romania and China (22 each), Germany (21), and Italy (20) (Fig. 1 and Fig. 2).



### **B. MEETINGS**

## a. Meetings organized by the IGU Local and Regional Development Commission or participation in meetings organized by IGU in 2024

Event	Period	Location	Organizer(s)	No. of sessions/ slots& papers	No. of atn.
<b>2024 AAG Annual Meeting</b> (two sessions, see section b.)	16 - 20 April	Honolulu, Hawai'i, USA	The American Association of Geographers (AAG)	2/11	30
IGU 2024 Thematic Conference 2024, Connecting Geographies from the Global South	15-19 May 2024	Quito, ECUADOR	FLACSO, Quito, Ecuador	1/5	15

European Meeting on Geography and Local Development-XII Coloquio de Desarrollo Local	3-5 June 2024	Alicante, SPAIN	University of Alicante, Local Development Working Group (Spanish Association of Geography)	Keynote paper/4	60
Pre-Congress Meeting of the IGU Commission on Local and Regional Development	20-23 August	Cork, IRELAND	University College Dublin	3/16	30
35th International Geographical Congress Celebrating a World of Difference (six sessions, see section b.)	25-30 August	Dublin, IRELAND	Dublin City University (DCU)	6/51	58

### b. A brief summary of the topics addressed at each meeting and the main findings



The AAG Annual Meeting is one of the largest international geography conferences. This year's themes focused on Reciprocal Scholarship, Colonialism and Resources, and Recovery and Restoration, reflecting Hawai'i's environmental, historical, and cultural context. Over 4,900 participants from 78 countries attended, with 1,086 sessions covering global geographical research. The IGU Commission on Local and Regional Development organized two sessions on the following topics:

- Border Regions, Peripheral Areas and Territorial Development (Chairs: Bianca Mitrică, Ines Grigorescu)
- Experiences in Co-creating Sustainability Strategies across Regions and Cultures using Living Labs and Participatory Methodologies (Chairs: Mihaela Sima, Ines Grigorescu)

The two sessions brought together 30 academics from prestigious institutions from 5 countries: Canada, Germany, Hong Kong, Romania and USA. The conference was attended by the current Chair (Dr. Ines Grigorescu), and Scientific secretary (Dr. Bianca Mitrică).

The results of the conference were presented to the public through the media, i.e., the LRD Commission Facebook Group (<a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/3345703419029601">https://www.facebook Group (<a href="https://www.facebook.com/geographers">https://www.facebook.com/geographers</a>).



2024 AAG Annual Meeting, Honolulu, Hawai'i 2024

### IGU 2024 THEMATIC CONFERENCE 2024, CONNECTING GEOGRAPHIES FROM THE GLOBAL SOUTH - QUITO, ECUADOR

The 2024 IGU Thematic Conference "Connecting Geographies from the Global South" was held in the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO), Quito, Ecuador, between May 15th and May 17th, 2024. The conference aims to facilitate intellectual exchange and to promote academic debates among scholars of emerging geographical epistemic communities in the Global South and elsewhere interested in addressing geographical issues in this part of the world.

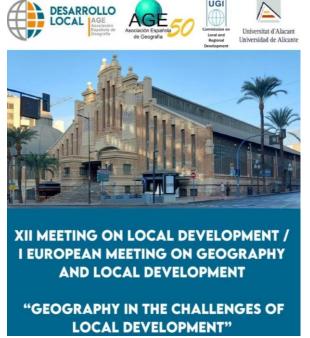
Associated IGU Commissions with this Conference: African Studies, Gender and Geography: Care, Connection and Change, Global Change and Human Mobility, Land Use and Land Cover Change, Latin

American and Caribbean Studies, Local and Regional Development, Political Geography. The conference was focused on: Geographies of quality of life, deprivation, and inequalities; Global environmental change, biodiversity, and cultural diversity; Geopolitics of South-South exchanges and South-North disparities; Geography of (in)mobilities in the globalized world; Geographical thinking in/from the Global South and alternative paradigms; Decolonization geography and politics of knowledge production; Gender and feminist geographies; Data-driven geographies, geospatial analysis, and artificial intelligence; Urbanization, (smart) cities, and urban-rural complex systems; Geographies of resources extractions in the South.

The IGU Commission on Local and Regional Development organized one session titled *Empowering the Global South: Nurturing Development and Addressing Socio-Economic Inequalities in Peripheral Regions* (Chairs: Ines Grigorescu, Ashley Gunther, Bianca Mitrică). Three Steering Members participated in Quito, including the former and current Chair (Jerzy Bański and Ines Grigorescu), as well as the Scientific Secretary (Bianca Mitrică).



IGU 2024 Thematic Conference 2024, Connecting Geographies from the Global South, Quito, Ecuador



The event took place on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Local Development Working Group (GTDL) of the Spanish Association of Geography (AGE). Its aim was to provide a platform to discuss the present and future of local and territorial development, highlighting the significant contributions Geography as a discipline can offer. Three key themes were addressed during the conference:

- I. Challenges of local development in professional practice
- II. Challenges of local development in training
- III. Challenges of local development in research

The Chair of the Commission, Ines Grigorescu, was invited to deliver a keynote speech titled *Climate Resilience of the Romanian Urban System: An Indicator-Based Framework Exploring the Vulnerability-Adaptation Nexus.* Additionally, the Scientific Secretary, Bianca Mitrică, was invited to present a scientific paper. Both Steering Members, along with the vice-chair Carmen Vázquez Varela served as part of the Scientific Committee of the conference.







European Meeting on Geography and Local Development, Alicante, Spain

The organized field trip to Villena, Petrer, Elche, Puçol, and Alicante aimed to provide insights into local development related to creative hubs, industrial diversification, and reuse in the context of enhancing Local Development.

The results of the conference were presented to the public through the media, i.e., the LRD Commission Facebook Group (<a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/3345703419029601">https://www.facebook.com/groups/3345703419029601</a>), website of AGE (<a href="https://www.age-geografia.es/site/events/xii-coloquio-de-desarrollo-local-y-i-european-meeting-on-geography-and-local-development/">https://www.age-geografia.es/site/events/xii-coloquio-de-desarrollo-local-y-i-european-meeting-on-geography-and-local-development/</a>, site of the University of Alicante <a href="https://vertice.cpd.ua.es/293719">https://vertice.cpd.ua.es/293719</a>)



THE PRE-IGC DUBLIN 2024 MEETING OF THE IGU COMMISSIONS ON LOCAL AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT, LAND USE & LAND COVER CHANGE AND HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMISSION

CORK, IRELAND August 20-23, 2024

The conference was initiated by the IGU Commission on Local and Regional Development and was held in collaboration with IGU Commission on Health and the Environment and IGU Commission on Land Use and Land Cover Change, aimed to share knowledge and ideas on key geographic research areas of the three IGU Commissions and beyond. It included three sessions on the following topics:

- Local and Regional Patterns of Rural-Urban Relationships
- Territorial Competitiveness, Cohesion and Sustainability
- Cross-border Cooperation, Peripheral Areas and Neighbourhood Policies
- Driving Forces, Impacts and Applications of Land Use/Cover Change at Various Spatial Scales
- Land Use/Cover Change and Land Degradation in Anthropocene
- Environmental Changes and Human Health: Vulnerabilities, Impacts and Inequalities;
- Health, Wellbeing and Sustainable Development in Urban and Rural Areas
- Public Health & Healthcare Systems after Pandemic: Changes, Challenges and Opportunities
- Innovation in teaching, AI emerging technologies and health geography education

The conference was organized together with the University College Cork, Ireland. The event brought together 47 academics from prestigious institutions from 7 countries: Belgium, China, Hungary, Ireland, Poland, Portugal and Romania. A large number of Steering Members participated in this conference, including the current Chair, Scientific Secretary and members of steering committee (Dr. Ines Grigorescu, Dr. Bianca Mitrică, Dr. Michal Konopski, Prof. Tamas Hardi), and corresponding members. In the conference also participated chairs and past-chairs, scientific secretaries and steering members of the other 2 commissions, e.g. Prof. Yola Verhasselt, Dr. Monica Dumitrașcu, Prof. Liliana Dumitrache, Prof. Ricardo Almendra, Prof. Paula Santana.

During this meeting, a joint event with the Urban Geography Commission was held.

The results of the conference were presented to the public through the media, i.e., the LRD Commission Facebook Group (<a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/3345703419029601">https://www.facebook.com/groups/3345703419029601</a>)

In addition to the very interesting scientific sessions, on August 22, 2024, a field trip was also carried out to Blarney Castle and Gardens, the Gearagh, Macroom, Bealna Blath, Charlesfort, Kinsale. The excursion focused on examining key aspects of local and regional development, land use and cover changes, as well as cultural heritage.







Pre-congress meeting of the IGU Commission on Local and Regional Development, Cork, Ireland, August 20-23, 2024



As part of this scientific event, the IGU Local and Regional Development Commission held 6 sessions (13 slots) proposed by some of the Steering Committee/Corresponding Members covering the following topics:

- Consequences of spatial inequalities: the case of left behind regions in East Central Europe (Chairs: Michal Konopski, Jerzy Bański, Institute of Geography and Spatial Organization, Polish Academy of Sciences, POLAND)
- Territorial development, peripheral areas and cross-border cooperation (Chairs: Bianca Mitrică, Institute of Geography Romanian Academy, ROMANIA, Gyula Ocskay, Central European Service for Cross-border Initiatives CESCI, HUNGARY)
- Place based policies and governance: Opportunities, challenges and diverse perspectives (Chair: Niamh Moore-Cherry, Dublin City University, IRELAND, Ami Crowther, Global Sustainability Institute, Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge, United Kingdom. University of Manchester, Manchester, UK)
- Achieving sustainable local development for rural communities through good governance (Chair: Ines Grigorescu, Institute of Geography Romanian Academy, ROMANIA)
- The digital turn in planning practices and policy making (Chair: Juliette Davret, Maynooth University, IRELAND)
- Rural-urban relationships and territorial development local and regional patterns (Chair: Ines Grigorescu, Institute of Geography Romanian Academy, ROMANIA)

A considerable number of Steering Members participated in Dublin, including the and former current Chair, and Scientific Secretary (Ines Grigorescu, Jerzy Bański, Michael Sofer, Bianca Mitrică, Michael Konopski), along with nearly 60 corresponding members. Participants represented over 20 countries, including Australia, Austria, China, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Mexico, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, the UK, USA.

### c. The meetings or other events you plan to hold in 2024 and later years, including locations, dates, and the topics/themes to be addressed.

Year	Event	Period	Location	Organizer(s)
2025	Egypt Thematic Conference 2025	April 12-19, 2025	Cairo, Egypt	Egyptian Geographical Society
2025	LRD Workshop Gyor (preparation in progress)	May/ September	Gyor, Hungary	Centre for Economic and Regional Studies, Institute for Regional Studies, West Hungarian Research Department
2025	IGU Thematic Conference	13-17 October	Lima, PERU	Universidad Católica del Peru
2025	IGU Thematic Conference: Diverse Geographies of Peace, Environmental Impacts, Territorial Conflicts, and War in the Contemporary World	October 27– November 1	Santa Marta, Colombia	National Committee of Colombia, National University of Colombia
2026	IGU Thematic Conference (preparation in progress)	February	Guwahati, India	Department of Geography, Gauhati University, Assam, India

### C. NETWORKING

#### 1. Collaboration with IGU commissions

- Commission on Land Use and Land Cover Change joint publications of the Steering Committee/Corresponding Members on various topics that connects the two Commissions; preparation of the IGU Thematic Conference to be held in Peru, in 2025; preparation of the IGU Thematic Conference to be held in Guwahati, India, in 2026
- Commission on Health and Environment preparation of the IGU Thematic Conference to be held in Peru; preparation of the IGU Thematic Conference to be held in Guwahati, India, in 2026;
- Commission on Biogeography and Biodiversity joint publications of the Steering Committee/Corresponding Members on various topics that connects the two Commissions; preparation of the IGU Thematic Conference to be held in Peru, in 2025;
- Commission on Latin American and Caribbean Studies preparation of the IGU Thematic Conference to be held in Peru, in 2025;
- Young and Early Career Task Force preparation of the IGU Thematic Conference to be held in Peru, in 2025; preparation of the IGU Thematic Conference to be held in Guwahati, India, in 2026;

#### 2. Other collaboration

- Institute of Geography, Romanian Academy (ROMANIA)
- Institute of Geography and Spatial Organization, Polish Academy of Sciences (POLAND) Inter-Academic Joint Research Project entitled Socio-economic impact of Ukrainian refugees. Comparative studies in Poland and Romania. The project is coordinated by Bianca Mitrică (Romania) and Michal Konopski (Poland), both serving as members of the Steering Committee
- Department of Geography and Environment, Faculty of Social Sciences, Bar-Ilan University, Ramat-Gan (ISRAEL) Inter-Academic Cooperation Agreement on Challenges and implications of the urban-rural relationships. Comparative studies from Romania and Israel. Coordinators from both sides are members of the Steering Committee: Ines Grigorescu (Romania) & Michael Sofer (Israel)
- Department of Geography and Spatial Planning of the University of Castilla La Mancha, Cuenca (SPAIN)
- Spanish Working Group of Local Development, part of the Association of Spanish Geographers (SPAIN)
- University of South Africa, Johannesburg
- National Institute for Geophysics, Geodesy, and Geography, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BULGARIA)
- Central European Service for Cross-Border Initiatives CESCI (HUNGARY), Member of the Presidential Board (Scientific Secretary Bianca Mitrică)
- Institute for Regional Studies, Centre for Economic and Regional Studies, West Hungarian Research
  Department Inter-Academic Joint Research Project entitled Cross-border Cooperation in the Middle and
  Lower Danube Basin. Geographical Studies with focus on Hungarian and Romanian Danubian Cities.
  Coordinators from both sides are members of the LRD Commission: Tamás Hardi (Hungary) & Radu
  Săgeată (Romania)
- Geographical Institute, Research Centre for Astronomy and Earth Sciences Inter-Academic Joint Research Project entitled *Economic, social and environmental urban disparities in Romania and Hungary*. Coordinators from both sides are members of the Commission: Patrik Tatrai (Hungary) & Bianca Mitrică (Romania)
- Romanian Geographical Society
- Journal Romanian Journal of Geography/Revue Roumaine de Geographie
- Journal Land (MDPI)
- Journal of the Bulgarian Geographical Society

### Digital networking

**IGU Local and Regional Development Commission Facebook Group** - to facilitate interactions and exchange knowledge and information on conferences and interesting publications between academics interested in topics dealing with local and regional development-related issues. So far, over 165 people are part of the Local and Regional Development Commission on Facebook Group. <a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/3345703419029601">https://www.facebook.com/groups/3345703419029601</a>.

### **D. PUBLICATIONS**

Revue Roumaine de Géographie/Romanian **Journal** of Geography, vol. 68, no. 1, 2024, Special Issue dedicated to Annual Meeting of the IGU Commission on Local and Regional Development Sociodemographic change



and its impact on territorial development policies, which was held in Cuenca 2022, Guest-editors: Ines Grigorescu, Carmen Vázquez Varela.

http://www.rjgeo.ro/issues.html

# ANTONIO MARTÍNEZ-PUCHE, MARIA HERNÁNDEZ, Professional practice in local development; an explorator GEORGIA TSEVA, PAVLOS M. DELLADETSIMA, JOÃO SARMENTO, Towards an analytical framework for assessing the impact of culture-driven interventions on integrated local development planning: insights from the case study of Piraeus Avenue in Athens, Greece MARÍA BAHAMONDE-RODRÍGUEZ, F. JAVIER GARCÍA-DELGADO, GIEDRE SADEIKAITE, Perception of local development and tourism in the vision of stakeholders in the Western Sierra Morena (Andalusia Soain) ROY SUBHAM KUMAR, KUMAR ANIRUDDH, Assessment of urban dynamics - a case study on Berhampore

HALIDOU KAFANDO, BLAISE OUEDRAOGO, VINCENT N. OJEH, MIHAELA SIMA, Mapping the groundwater potential in Sub-Saharan Africa: the case of Loumbila commune, Burkina Faso

GEORGE TĂNASE, OANA MITITELU-IONUȘ, CRISTIANA VÎLCEA, MIHAELA LICURICI, SANDU BOENGIU, Spatial correlation between suffosion processes and land use in Sălcuţa Plain (Southwestern Romania)

### **Books in preparation**

- Special issue of the Romanian Journal of Geography, organized jointly by the IGU Young and Early Career Geographers (YECG) Commission and the Institute of Geography of the Romanian Academy. This special issue is dedicated to showcasing the work of young geographers. Invited editor: Scientific Secretary of the LRD Commision, Bianca Mitrică.
- Agricultural Land Use: Structural Transformations, Environment Challenges, Planning and Policy (Rutledge) - Editor: Jerzy Bański,

### Publications of the Steering/Corresponding Members derived from previous conferences (co)organised by the IGU Commission on LRD (2023-2024): published and in preparation (selection):

- Mitrică B., Bălteanu D., Damian N., Saghin D., Precup I., Ilieș M., Lupchian M.-M. (2024), The Ukrainian refugees in Romania: perception and social challenges, Disasters, DOI: 10.1111/disa.12660.
- 2 papers in F.J. García-Delgado, M. Hernández-Hernández, A. Martínez-Puche, L.A. Hortelano Mínguez, & V.M. Zapata Hernández (eds.), La Geografía ante los Retos del Desarrollo Local. XII Coloquio de Desarrollo Local-I European Meeting on Geography and Local Development, University of Alicante, Spain:
  - Mitrică, M., Roznoviețchi, I., Grigorescu, I., Damian, N., Dumitrașcu, M., & Persu, M. (2024). Social and technological inequalities related to out-migration. A county-level perspective in Romania.
  - Grigorescu, I., Mitrică, B., Mocanu (Roznoviețchi), I., Șerban, P., Persu, P., Dumitrașcu, M., Urșanu, E.A., Sima, M., Micu, D., & Dumitrică, C. (2024). Climate resilience of the Romanian urban system: an indicator-based framework exploring the vulnerability-adaptation nexus.
- Popovici E.-A., Grigorescu I., Dumitrică C., Kucsicsa Gh, Mitrică B., Mocanu I., Dumitrașcu M., Ciubuc C., Long-term changes of agricultural land over the last century in Romania. The showcase of Romanian Plain, Anthropocene, 100449, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ancene.2024.100449 (IF: 3.3)
- Sima M., Dumitrașcu M., Grigorescu I., Costache A. (2024), Tourists' perception of socio-cultural values of ecosystem services and management perspectives at the Vadu wild beach, Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve, Romania. Ocean & Coastal Management, 257, 107312, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ocecoaman.2024.107312 (IF: 4.8)
- Popovici E.-A., Grigorescu I., Mocanu, I, (2024), Land reform catalysts of capitalism and communism: 150 years of agricultural change in Romania, Journal of Historical Geography, Volume 86, 326-340, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhg.2024.10.013 (IF: 1.3)
- Grigorescu, I.; Mitrică, B.; Roznoviețchi, I.; Şerban, P.-R.; Dumitrașcu, M.; Damian, N.; Dumitrică, C. Cultural Tourism in Buzău Carpathians and Sub-Carpathians (Romania): Local Businesses' Perspective. Land 2024, 13, 2235. https://doi.org/10.3390/land13122235

### URL of the Commission's website.

Website: <a href="http://igu-clrd.igipz.pan.pl/home.html">http://igu-clrd.igipz.pan.pl/home.html</a>

### E. ARCHIVAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Copies/links of all materials and publications sent to the IGU Secretary General.