

IGU CGE Symposium 2010 was held in Istanbul Turkey, on 8-10 July.

The Commission on Geographical Education (CGE) of the International Geographical Union (IGU) has organized an International Symposium on Geographical Education in association with the European Association of Geographers (EUROGEO), Fatih University and Balikesir University in Istanbul – Turkey from July 8 – 10, 2010. About 100 geographers have gathered in Istanbul from 23 countries to discuss latest developments in geographical education. Although many different subjects have been discussed in the symposium, the main theme of the symposium was representations of cultural differences through geographical education.

The symposium program included five keynote speeches, 55 oral presentations, a workshop, and a wide range of social activities. In his keynote speech, Joseph P. Stoltman from Western Michigan University – USA addressed geographical education and international understanding from a historical perspective. Margaret Robertson from La Trobe University – Australia highlighted the role of young people's wisdom in future directions of geographical education in her keynote speech. In his keynote speech, Mehmet Ipsirli from Fatih University – Turkey shed light upon understanding the Ottoman – Turkish educational system. In the following two keynote speeches, Hartwig Haubrich from the University of Education – Germany and Karl Donert, the President of EUROGEO have addressed geographical education for intercultural competence and education for spatial citizenship respectively. The only workshop of the symposium was given by Michael Solem from the Association of American Geographers (AAG) on using web-based materials for international collaboration and learning.

Many different subjects have been discussed in the oral presentations which were held in 12 different sessions classified per topics. The session topics included; (1) education in multicultural environment, (2) curricular studies in geographical education, (3) cultural representations in geography textbooks, (4) the world, students, and perceptions, (5) spatial technologies in education, (6) models in geographical education, (7) the 2005 geographical education reform in Turkey, (8) culture, ethnicity, and society, (9) geography in higher education, (10) environment, globalization, and geography education, (11) cultural representations in education, (12) geography learning and teaching. The numerous issues covered during the sessions reflected the importance of geographical education in many certain subjects especially in building bridges between cultures throughout the world. The proceedings of the symposium will be published online and made available from the symposium webpage (<http://igucge2010.fatih.edu.tr>).

The symposium provided the participants not only an opportunity to discuss scientific issues, to create network and corporations among participants, but also a chance to explore Turkey, especially Istanbul, the 2010 European Capital of Culture from cultural and historical perspectives. The opening dinner, the concert on Turkish classical, art, and folk music, the boat tour along the Bosphorus, and a daily city tour in the historical peninsula of Istanbul were the main social activities organized during the symposium.

The symposium lasted only three days, but the friendship and cooperation which were created during the symposium are most likely to continue forever. Participants have already promised to meet at the following regional symposium which will be organized in April 2011 in London, UK.