



Report of the Night of Geography 2018 in Europe

The second edition of the Night of Geography, or “Geo Night”, initiated by the the French National Geographical Committee (CNFG), took place across Europe on April 6th, 2018. Bearing in mind the original goal of making known the geographers and the discipline to larger crowds including the general public, many European cities have organised events. It is estimated that over 15 000 people attended the various events throughout Europe. Several countries such as Ireland, Poland, Romania, Belgium, the Netherlands, Croatia, and Lithuania, have contributed to the collective success of the “Geo Night” without necessarily organising or reporting their events. To promote the events and to inform the public, digital platforms such as websites, mailing lists, and social media (mostly Facebook) were widely used. Hence, the 2018 “Geo Night” can be considered a large success on the European scale. This report provides foci on the events put in place in countries such as France, Italy, Hungary, Portugal, Greece, and Spain.

Focus on some European countries on the Night of Geography 2018

Country	Number of Events	Number of Cities
France	60	20
Italy	37	22
Hungary	14	11
Portugal	6	2
Greece	6	2
Spain	10	5

France

In France, around twenty cities participated in the Night of Geography 2018. An increase of the number of department of geographies involved this year was reported. The wide range of activities proposed to the public has made it a very successful night. For instance, in Dijon, the spotlight was put on the regional specificities such as the gastronomic heritage which included a tasting of the local products. In Paris, participants enjoyed a orientation race throughout the city as well as an exhibition on the history of cartography and an urban fieldtrip in the “City of Lights”. In Clermont-Ferrand, the public was given the opportunity to enjoy walking and cycling fieldtrips, drawing competition, doctoral theses’ presentations, and live radio debates. In Dunkirk, over 85 people attended a comedy club where students and teaching staff presented the discipline aspects with a humorous spirit. Finally, the “Geo Night” in Lyon offered simultaneous activities, including urban walks showing gentrification processes in the city, several conferences and debates, poster and photo exhibitions, and collective mapping. A complete report of all events organised in France is available (in French) on the French Committee website (www.cnfg.fr).

Italy

In Italy, 37 events were organised in 22 cities. From conferences on little known geographies related to music and literature, to urban walks in abandoned and empty spaces, photographic and documentary exhibitions. From Roma to Naples, from Padua to Milano and throughout the country, around 10 000 people took part in the events organised by the Italian departments of geography. On average, 270 people attended the events with a peak of 800 gathering for the biggest event. The overall success of these events were also followed carefully by national media including TV, radio, and newspapers which largely spread the word through many outlets.

Examples of the outlets covering the “Geo Night” in Italy



Hungary

In Hungary, 14 events were organised, of which 4 occurred in the capital city, Budapest, and the rest in 10 other cities across the country. For its first participation, the Hungarian “Geo Night” was marked by several categories of organisers: geography departments, secondary schools, tourist sites, an NGO, and a virtual location. The activities proposed to the public ranged from urban walks at sunset to guided excursions through nature with a campfire, conferences, photo exhibitions, a photo contest, and a popular quiz game. The latter involved 229 people. Altogether, it is reported that 819 people took part of the Geo night, averaging about 60 attendees per event. This first “Geo Night” in Hungary was a success in attracting large crowds and putting the geographical discipline forward.

The diversity of events organised in Hungary



Portugal

The 2018 Geo Night in Portugal was festive. In Porto, narrative field trips retracing the nocturnal dynamic and the history of the city were organised. These field trips were followed by a celebratory picnic. Overall, 60 participants took part in Porto’s activities. In Lisbon, two field trips were organised. The first one invited participants to walk through an old industrial area of the city, highlighting the development of nocturnal activities. The second event consisted of a bike tour through the network of bike lanes to discover Lisbon’s night landscape. In total, 40 people participated in the events organised in Lisbon.

Festive fieldtrips in Portugal



Greece

For their first participation in the “Geo Night”, Greece’s geography departments organised events in Mytiline (Aegean University), on the island of Lesbos, and in Athens (the National Technical University of Athens and Harokopio University). The main objective of the “Geo Night” in Greece was to make geography known to a broader public and to enhance the learning and the appreciation of geography. At the Aegean University, several activities were organised simultaneously and throughout the night with an estimated number of participants reaching over 500. The event started with a musical theme which lasted throughout the night, followed by a tour of the geography department. Children also contributed to the evening by showing their representations of Earth and its inhabitants through several painting activities. Then, participants took part in a race through the city. The night concluded with the viewing of a student movie about the representation of students’ daily geography on campus and in the city.

The Greek poster for the Night of Geography



At the National Technical University of Athens, several activities were set up: from discussions regarding recreational spaces and the “imageability” in Athens, to games proposing to explore the city beyond the visible. At Harokopio University campus, the “Geo Night” was entitled “Scribbling the Earth / Depicting the Earth” which was a pun on the word “geography” in Greek.

For this occasion, several workshops offered insights on the diversity of geographical subjects, including presentations on Eratosthene’s measurement of the planet, circular economy, and the functioning of weather stations. In total, the events that took place in Athens held over 300 participants.

The diversity of activities organised at Harokopio University



Spain

In Spain, many events were organised in Barcelona, Tarragona, Sant Llorenç del Munt, and Granada. Numerous activities were proposed to the public, such as: a photographic contest, the screening of a documentary on the sovereignty of the seas and oceans, a field trip in Granada showing its social reality and its relationship with the urban configuration of the city, a geographical dinner and festive gathering in Barcelona, and a presentation on the

project of the recovery of the abandoned village of Masia de Castelló where geographers explained their roles and visions.

To conclude, many countries were interested in organising events but did not for various reasons, however these dynamics should lead to more participating cities and actors in 2019! The feedback from cities where Geo Night's events were organised has been very positive and the events were warmly welcomed and appreciated by the many participants and attendees. Let's keep this momentum going and start planning the events for the third edition of the Geo Night, which will occur on April 5th, 2019.

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