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ICA Secretary General and Treasurer, HUNGARY

Keynote speech title:

“ICA’s modern cartography”

Abstract

The successful development of modern cartography requires integrated interdisciplinary approaches from domains such as information technology, communication science, cognitive sciences, geospatial information management. It is those interdisciplinary approaches which make sure that we work towards human-centred application developments by applying innovative engineering methods and tools in a rapidly developing technological environment.

Nevertheless, many cartographic principles remain unchanged; the most important one being that maps are abstract visualisations or models of the reality. Visualization of selected information means that some features present in reality are depicted more prominently than others, while many features might not even be depicted at all according to the theory of generalization, which is well-known for experienced cartographers; however, this can be absolutely obscure for the ordinary users. Abstract visualisation makes a map very powerful, as it helps to perceive and interpret complex situations efficiently. Maps are most efficient in enabling human users to understand relationships between mapped features and the reality. Maps can be understood as tools to order information by their social and spatial context.

Modern cartography enables the general public (crowd-sourcing) to participate in the modelling and visualizing of the risks their neighbourhood may suffer from on a voluntary basis. Modern cartography helps to quickly spread relevant information visualising them for all interested parties.

Knowledge about spatial relations and the location of objects is most important for handling disasters and crisis situations or just to be able to bring established decisions. Cartography is also most contemporary, as new and innovative technologies have an important impact on what cartographers are doing: they are inventing modern cartography. The ICA has a catalyst role in this process integrating research teams, giving forum for experts of the ICA member countries and encouraging scientific cooperation with the help of the ICA’s commissions.

Short CV

László Zentai is a Full Professor of the Department of Cartography and Geoinformatics at Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary. He is serving now as the Vice-dean of the Faculty of Informatics and he was the Vice-Rector of the university (2007-2010). Mr. Zentai was the chairman of the Commission on Education and Training, International Cartographic Association (ICA) and he is serving as the Chairman of the Hungarian National ICA Group. He was elected for the Secretary-General of the ICA in 2011. He is a Council member of the International Orienteering Federation. His papers are dealing with computer cartography, cartographic education, topographic mapping, orienteering maps, environmental protection and web cartography.

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