



Educational and outreach activities in Romania in order to promote Geosciences

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In Romania, Geosciences do not have an adequate public presence, while geological literacy of people is very low. As geology is no longer part of the school curricula for almost two decades, the number of young people interested to enroll to faculties of geology is diminishing every year. Therefore, research institutes have to collaborate with museums and develop educational and outreach activities both for primary schools and the general public. The National Museum of Geology in Bucharest, which belongs to the Geological Institute of Romania, started to develop educational and public programs in 2006. These were very successful for several years, but changes in the institute management resulted in their abandonment. However, in 2018 the Museum developed new programs dedicated to schools and general public. The „Victor Gorduza” County Museum of Mineralogy in Baia Mare lately developed summer schools and camps in order to promote geodiversity. In the absence of specialized outreach providers in Romania, GeoEcoMar also started to be involved in outreach activities in 2010, as coorganizer of an exhibition dedicated to a XIXth century scientific expedition along the Danube. Activities continued by developing public lectures and temporary or travelling exhibitions and participating in Science Fairs. In 2014, the institute became partner of the Transylvania Dinosaur Museum Project, which resulted in the reconstruction of the first three museum quality dwarf dinosaurs from the Hațeg Country. In a project starting in 2016 and financed by the Ministry of Education, GeoEcoMar developed a dedicated educational program for primary and secondary schools – the Geology Lesson, along with public lectures and various events for the general public. GeoEcoMar also organized temporary and travelling exhibitions with support from the Ministry of Research and Innovation. These exhibitions, which are promoting the most valuable paleontological heritage of Romania, the dwarf dinosaurs from the Hațeg Country, are accompanied by various promotional materials and workshops for children. The institute also participates in „The school differently”, a program of the Ministry of Education, organizing hands-on activities on paleontology and marine biology and workshops for schools. In 2018, students from various organizations in Bucharest, like Bucharest Student Chapter of Society of Exploration Geophysicists – SEG of BSC and Geology and Geophysics Student Association – ASGG, also started to organize outreach activities in high schools and managed to attract new students to the Faculty of Geology and Geophysics. In 2018, „The Earth Science Week” was organized for the first time in 6 counties of Romania, under the coordination of the Geological Society of Romania, with involvement of five main universities, museums, the Hațeg Global Geopark, GeoEcoMar and BSC of AAPG. We hope that this event, sporadically organized in Romania before, will be even more successful in 2019. For long term results, further joint efforts of various institutions are necessary for organizing diversified outreach activities in order to raise awareness on the importance of Geosciences for the society.