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**ROMANIAN – ALGERIAN COLLABORATION
WITHIN THE ERASMUS PROGRAMME, EARTH SCIENCES
15-22 DECEMBER 2024**

The Erasmus programme, initiated and coordinated by the European Union, originally only within the EU member countries, is currently also being carried out with non-EU countries, based on interuniversity collaborations. “Erasmean” spirit advocate, the programme bears the name of Erasmus of Rotterdam, “the first to have a European conscience, the first militant pacifist, the most eloquent defender of the humanist ideal of spiritual understanding worldwide” (Zwieg, 1975). His humanist attitude and existence are part of the 15th century of great geographical discoveries (1466 birth year) by great thinkers of philosophy. From ancient Greeks and Romans through the Renaissance to the present day, the need for spiritual understanding has known varied, sometimes confusing, meanings and applications. In this context, the Erasmus meaning of understanding between people appears today a solution to human coexistence. That is why geography, through its multidisciplinary research object, is the science that is part of universal knowledge, and the Erasmus project was adopted as a means of understanding the world. The Erasmus partnership concluded in 2019 between the University of Bucharest (Faculty of Geography) and the University of Constantine facilitated the knowledge of the various forms of education, culture and science of the two countries – Romania and Algeria.

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In the period of 15-22 December 2024, a team of professors from the Faculty of Geography participated in the Erasmus Programme in Algeria in the following activities:

A. International Conference Natural Risks, Urban Territory Management and Analysis Tools "The Advantages of Artificial Intelligence" (December, 16-18, 2024), at the occasion of the 10th conference of the Romanian-Algerian geographical cooperation, organized by: University of M'Sila Mohamed Boudiaf; Institute of Urban Techniques Management; LABORATORY City, Environment, Hydraulics and Sustainable Development (director Prof. Ali Redjem). The Chairman of the Organizing Committee was Prof. Nouibat Brahim (University of M'Sila).

In the opening session plenary communications were held by prof. Florina Grecu, prof. Andre Ozer, Mahmoud Hasbaia. The oral communications were conducted in five sections, in several stages, to allow discussions and debates on the communicated topics, as follows:

- Cities, urban resilience and natural hazards,
- Conservation of urban ecosystems,
- Spatial planning, cartography and digitisation,
- Urban mobility and regional planning,
- Urban and architectural heritage in the digital era.

The presentations of the University of Bucharest authors were focused on the topic of natural and anthropogenic hazards and the associated risks, related to climate change:

- *Some results of the Romanian-Algerian cooperation in geographical science at the occasion of the 10th conference (2006-2024)* – Florina Grecu, Abdelkader Abdellaoui, Chaouki Benabbas, Ali Redjem.
- *UNESCO Heritage Site Exposed to Natural and Man-Made Geomorphological Hazards* – Andreea Andra-Topârceanu, Mihai Mafteiu, Mihaela Verga, Adriana-Bianca Ovreiu, Sonia Malvica, Donatella Carboni.
- *Anthropogenic transformation of Danube River Valley in its lower sector* – Mihaela Verga, Andreea Marin, Andreea Andra-Topârceanu.

- *Active Tectonic Context and Gravity Processes in North-East Algeria* – Chaouki Benabbas, Florina Grecu, Yacine Benzid,
- *Impact of climate variability on forest fires, methodological Approach (Case of the wilaya of Skikda-Algeria)* – Naouel Mihoubi, Soumiya Boulahbal, Florina Grecu, Sara Aziz.
- *Climate change and the related environmental policies used in Romania* – Emilia Visan, Gheorghe Visan.

Field trips were organized in accordance with the theme of the conference, so as to allow the continuation of discussions regarding the relationship between the territorial arrangement and the dynamics of the terrestrial space. The visited sites included: **EL KALAA des Beni Hammade**, a representative geosite for the history of Hodna Mountains area, but also for its geological and geomorphological complexity; **Maghreb PIPE Industries**, a local company used as a good practice example for sustainable industrial development. Both field trips were accompanied by extensive explanations given by colleagues from the University of M'Sila, as well as by specialists from the industry. These practical activities prove the usefulness of such work visits, well appreciated by the participants.

Excellent organization, high scientific attire of communications, reliability of participants, all are attributes that enrol the seminar from M'Sila in the list of the most successful ones, making unforgettable memories for all over 100 participants in the wonderful area of the Hodna Depression in the Atlas Mountains.



Figure 1. Beni Hammad Fort in Hodna Mountains

B. PhD day at the University of Constantine3 (December 19, 2024). Festivity of doctoral thesis defense *Vulnerabilite et risque d'inondation : vers une strategie de prevention et d'adaptation Cas de la ville de Constantine* by Manel YAKHLEFOUNE, coordinated by Prof. Chaouki BENABBAS and Pr Florina GRECU. During the meeting, the PhD attendant also presented scientific works included in the thesis preparation plan.

A **working meeting at CRAT** (Research Center for Territorial Arrangements, led by prof. Chaouki Benabbas) was also included in the program of the visit to Constantine. The discussions about the organization of the center, the research topics and the collaboration between CRAT and the University of Bucharest highlighted the need for material basis, collaboration between specialists from different fields with emphasis on current research concerns related to the development of society, climate change, etc.



Figure 2. Romanian Team visiting CRAT

Different **field trips in the area of Constantine city** were organized in the following days. The name of the city is related to the Roman emperor Constantine. The Roman inhabitation in northern Africa left numerous sites, evidence of the technique and the advanced level of ancient Roman civilization.

The *roman site Tidis*, set in a picturesque mountain landscape, has a rich history. Initially representing a Berber settlement, the site was converted as a defense outpost in the Roman period (sec. 3 AD), having a strategic position in a narrowed sector of Rhumel valley.

The *Masinisa mausoleum* is the tomb of the King of Numibia, a prominent figure in the history of North Africa during the 3rd century BC. He managed to unify Berber tribes during the Second Punic War and to create a powerful kingdom allied to Rome.



Figure 3. Archeological site of Tidis (a) and Masinisa Tomb (b)

La Medina represents the heart of Constantine city, the historic center formed by a labyrinth of narrow streets, with specific Islamic architecture and rich trades history, that has preserved the unique urban landscape for centuries. The culinary experience on a traditional restaurant placed above the Rhumel river gorges has familiarized us with the local specific of gastronomy.

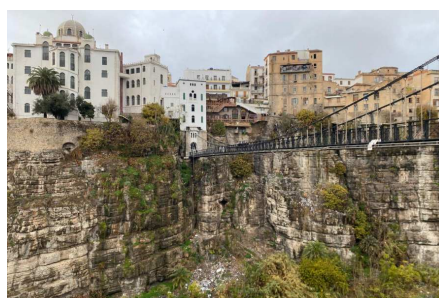


Figure 4. Constantine City

Given the complexity and variety of activities, we believe that this program has helped to strengthen the collaboration relations between the two partner universities in Algeria (University of M'Sila, University of Constantine³) and the University of Bucharest, contributed to the expansion of the network by initiating the partnership agreement with CRAT and enriched the cultural and social experiences of the participants.

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