

**Name of the Union**  
**IGU**  
**Activities' Report - Year 2018**

**By Italy's Representative in IGU**

**Prof. Maria Paradiso**

Università di Milano 'Statale' [maria.paradiso@unimi.it](mailto:maria.paradiso@unimi.it)

### **1. Introduction**

With the Quebec UGI Congress of August 2018 we have further confirmed the centrality of Italian participation in the IGU coordination activities. The Italy's Representative, jointly with the involved colleagues successfully committed for reconfirming in the position of one of IGU Vice Presidents Professor Elena Dell'Agnese, Bicocca University; Italian Commission Chairs have been reconfirmed: Cosimo Palagiano for Toponymy (Joint Commission IGU-ICA), Maria Paradiso for Mediterranean Basin, Marcella Schmidt di Friedberg for History of Geographical Thought; Andrea Vacca for Land Degradation and Desertification; Barbara Staniscia as Executive Secretary "Human Mobility". There are Italians in Political Geography Steering and active participation in Rural Geography is increasing; Finally, thanks to the diffusion of the UGI information by the Representative of Italy Dr. Teresa Graziano was selected as a member of Steering in the new Task Force Young Geographers, coordinated by Martina Caretta Italian in the scientific diaspora in the United States.

For the Congress of Quebec it has been reported that Prof. Maria Paradiso has been invited to hold a 'Luminary Talk' at the Congress (IGU Luminary Talk - Maria Paradiso - Mediterranean Basin Commission: sharing experience and knowledge <http://igu2018.ulaval.ca/program-activities-photos/program/>), in plenary, with introduction by UGI President Professor Yukio Himiyama. Comments and invitations from

Prof. Himiyama and IGU Past President Ron Abler commented in favour for bridging Commission Mediterranean Basin scientific and organizational experience to the in the new Ocean and Seas scientific strands connecting with ISC-International Science Council. Professor Ron Abler expressed interest and wishes for a stable relationship with the community of American and Canadian geographers on the themes of geographies of the sea and the Mediterranean.

### **2. Main activities carried on by (Union name) during 2018 relevant for Italy and for CNR**

The Representative started a collaboration with the French counterpart that led to the European popular science event, promoted by the IGU National Representatives of 'the Night of Geography-Nuit de la Géographie'.

On the basis of the IGU strategic notes, the follow up to the report at the Quebec Congress and the election of two well-known geographers in ISC-International Science Council, Professor Ruth Fincher and Ann Davies, one can envisage and strongly recommend the essential improved coordination within the CNR with regard to the former ICSU National Committee and its evolution; and in particular the possibility in agreement with the Director of the Department of Social Sciences, for synergies with the Department of Land and Environment, given the particular status of Geography with socio-humanistic and physical interdisciplinary skills.

All IGU information and reports are accessible on the website <http://igu-online.org/>**Activities carried on by (Italian Delegate name) within the Union during 2017 and impact on the Italian scientific community.**

### **3. Evaluation of the participation in terms of benefits and membership cost**

Maria Paradiso has set up a stable channel of information in the national community regarding the IGU world. She has participated in all the IGU Conferences over the years, has also taken part in the last IGU vote in Quebec 2018. Italy has supported all candidates who have been elected. Maria Paradiso took part in the consultations and votes for the programming of the IGU General and Thematic Conferences for the coming years, as well as actively participated in the General Assemblies and ad hoc meetings.

With the Beijing UGI Congress of 2018 we recorded a further advancement of the Italian participation in the Commissions presidencies and the confirmation of Elena dell'Agnese who continues the mandate of Vice President after the support received by the Representative Maria Paradiso during the electoral campaign.

The Night of Geography / Nuit de la Géographie was organized in Italy in concert with the President of the Association of Italian Geographers and several UGI National Committees, with the participation of numerous Italian Universities and research centres (Italy was the most active) and many others at European scale in April 2018. The European Coordination was French, Maria Paradiso as IGU National Chair was member in the Night of Geography Steering Committee promoting synergies with President AgeI Prof. Andrea Riggio and Secretary Eugeo Massmiliano Tabusi in Italy.

A new volume 'Mediterranean Mobilities. Europe's changing relationship's edited by Maria Paradiso with the participation in the drafting of chapters by CNR researchers of the Institute directed by Dr. Corrado Bonifazi was published by Springer Nature.

#### **4. Evaluation of Italians' attendance and how to improve interest and involvement**

Main financial problems for the majority of Italian scholars for attending big and international events still remain. There is the need now to set a formal Italy's IGU Group partially funded by CNR to sustain the Representative's action in this regard.

As it emerges from previous reports, the financial problems of Italian public research in the social sciences and humanities sector and the August period do not favor a numerically stronger presence, while broad transparency and access to information is ensured by the Representative with the support of the AgeI Association of Italian Geographers and all other associations to members of the national community.

Upon invitation of President AgeI, the Representative cooperated with the Department of Social Sciences (Director Prof. Gilberto Corbellini) for the realization of a study day in January 2011 at the CNR on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of AGEI with the participation of CNR representatives.

#### **5. Italian experts with important roles within the Union or within related Commissions and Programs (if known)**

Maria Paradiso Chair Mediterranean Basin, Cosimo Palagiano for Topomimy (Joint Commission IGU-ICA), Andrea Vacca for Land Degradation and Desertification, Marcella Schmidt of Friedberg for History of Geographical Thought; Barbara Staniscia Executive Secretary "Human Mobility"; Dr. Teresa Graziano, unfortunately not a structured one in the Task Force Yong Geograohers.

There are Italians in Political Geography Steering and new promising collaborations in the Rural Geography one. Elena Dell'Agnese continues the mandate of Vice President after the support received by the Representative Maria Paradiso during the electoral campaign.

#### **6. If Union with CNR Commission, short summary about the 2017 CNR Commission activities**

Currently there **is not a truly** IGU national IGU Commission within the CNR. Anyway, the electronic information on activities and the complete collaboration now with AGEI Association of Italian Geographers are highlighted.

A joint National Committee is expected and kindly requested to be composed by members of the National Academic Committee and CNR members on common issues pertaining to geography within the CNR.

The current Committee that provides the presence (by way of practice) of the presidents of the major associations must be reformed to make room for younger colleagues who are engaged in international scientific activities, primarily in IGU. Finally, it would be desirable to include CNR colleagues on major issues such as migration, the Mediterranean and sustainability.

## 7. Notes (if any)

It is suggested that the activity of the Representative, together with the competent CNR bodies, may be supported in other missions activities abroad -and not only that one of participation in UGI congresses- in order to develop further joint initiatives.

We propose the creation of a mixed National Committee between members of the national academic geography community and CNR representatives; this Committee should provide for a CNR loan.

## 8. Conclusions

I reserve the right to broaden some arguments or provide additional information and considerations. I remain available for further clarifications or proposals.



Prof.ssa Maria Paradiso  
Università di Milano 'Statale'.  
Dept.BAC  
Italian Representative in IGU

Naples, 6 June 2019