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Book of Abstracts

the 4th Joint Congress of the Czech and Slovak
Geographical Societies

Geography in the Changing World

Košice, 7 – 10 September 2026

Marián Kulla – Ladislav Novotný
Loránt Pregi – Katarína Onačillová (eds.)

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How to teach controversial issues in geography?

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Keywords: European Values Study (EVS), geography, values education, teaching controversial issues, teaching strategies, interactive

How can geography education contribute to a better understanding of controversial issues in contemporary society? How can it foster values such as personal responsibility, solidarity, tolerance, active citizenship and democratic thinking?

The workshop aims to present a series of interactive tools, teaching materials, and instructional strategies to support geography teachers in teaching topics often perceived as sensitive or controversial due to differing opinions and attitudes, such as migration, the climate crisis, and related issues. These topics frequently present considerable challenges in classroom practice.

The workshop is based on the outcomes of two consecutive Erasmus+ KA2 projects: European Values Education (EVALUE, 2019–2022) and Teaching Controversial Issues (TCI, 2023–2026). The projects were carried out by interdisciplinary teams of geographers, sociologists, education specialists, and secondary school teachers from several European countries. The consortium included universities in Tilburg (the Netherlands), Leuven (Belgium), İzmir (Turkey), and Banská Bystrica (Slovakia), as well as the European Association of Geographers (EUROGEO).

Both projects build on the extensive database of the European Values Study (EVS), a large-scale cross-national repeated cross-sectional research programme examining the values, opinions, and attitudes of Europeans. The EVS has been conducted every nine years since 1981 and currently covers almost all European countries. Through the unique integration of basic and applied research, EVS data have been transformed into a comprehensive collection of interactive maps and other educational tools available at www.atlasofeuropeanvalues.eu. The website also provides sample teaching materials and guidance on applying twelve versatile teaching strategies that can be used not only in values education and the teaching of controversial issues but also across the geography curriculum. During the workshop, participants will have the opportunity to learn how to use the interactive tools and experience several of these teaching strategies.

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