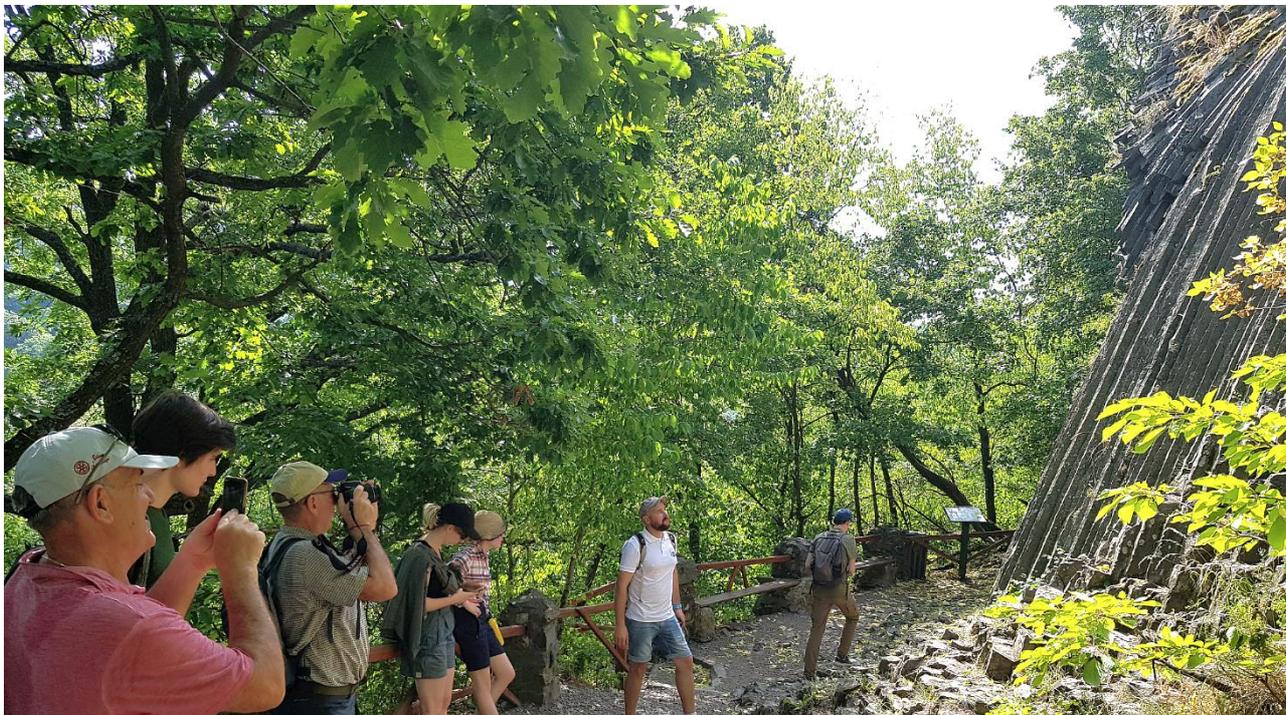


GGN – Novohrad-Nógrád Geopark Annual Report 2022

1. GEOPARK IDENTITY

Geopark name, country, regional Network: Novohrad-Nógrád UNESCO Global Geopark, Slovakian - Hungarian transnational, European Geoparks Network

Year of inscription / Year of the last revalidation: 2010 / 2022



UNESCO REVALIDATION / field visit of the columnar basalt in Somoska geosite (Slovak side)

2. GEOPARK FIGURES

Number of Geopark staffs: 16 people including 2 geoscientists

Number of visitors: to main geosites approx. 220 000 people

Number of Geopark events: 36

Number of school classes realize Geopark educational programs: 30

Number of Geopark press release: 26

3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES

Major achievements in 2022

- UNESCO Revalidation of the NN UGGp
- The planning phase of a new comprehensive development project (Enjoy Park) began last year targeting shared development of geosites and linked visitor facilities on county level.

Contribution towards GGN - Networking and participation

- Participation in EGN CC meetings and conference,
- Taking part in GGN endorsed events like the Geodiversity Day
- Participating in the EGN Volcanic, Fossils and the Intangible Heritage Working Groups
- Contributing with an article to the book of the EGN Volcanic Areas
- Contributing with photos to the planned book on the 177 UNESCO Global Geoparks
- Taking part in the Erasmus + visits from other UNESCO Global Geoparks
- Running projects of the GEOTOP and RiWild programs, Interreg V-A Slovakia-Hungary
- Taking part in the IGCP 726 GEOfood for sustainable development in UNESCO Global Geoparks
- Representation in the UGGp Youth Forum
- Organizing events for the EGN Week and for the second Volcano Day in Europe

- Taking part in the transnational-crossborder UNESCO Global Geoparks Forum's online meetings and signing the common statement of the Forum, regarding the war in Ukraine.

Management and Financial Status

- Restructuring management after the covid-19 epidemic eased a bit on the budget yet the war in the neighborhood Ukraine caused some difficulties in the daily life of the geopark.
- The influx of asylum seekers coming from Ukraine was big in spring, the crisis lessened by end of summer, putting less pressure on the geopark infrastructure in both sides of the border. (Both countries have confine with Ukraine).

Geoconservation

- The last year's drought generally affected the territory of the NN UGGp, the wetlands and forests suffered, but this was not bad for the geological excavations and outcrops, the need to eradicate overgrown plants subsided a bit. Luckily no serious fires affected the area.
- Conservation and rehabilitation of excavated areas and geosites was an ongoing activity in partnership with the Bükk National Park Directorate (BNPD- Hungary), Cerová vrchovina Protected Landscape Area (Slovakia) and other stakeholders.

Sustainable tourism (Geotourism)

- Geo-lodge brand was introduced, marketing sustainable accommodation facilities within the territory of the NN UGGp. GEOfood restaurants were promoted. Several thematic geotourism offers were developed for off seasons (like at the Ipolytarnoc Fossils NR). The visitor centers organized several family events, the number of visitors reached the level of the year 2019.

New education programmes on geoconservation, sustainable development and disaster risk reduction

- The transnational NN UGGp, is bordered (both Slovakia and Hungary) by the war battered Ukraine. The geopark and its stakeholders, NGOs and municipalities, especially the bigger towns like Fil'akovo (Slovakia) or Salgótarján (Hungary) organized fundraising and collected medical, food and other aids and transported them to the Ukrainian border even at the first phase of the war. Later several hundreds of refugees have found temporary homes with full boards in the different facilities of the geopark area. At our camps and hotels all of the previous reservations had to be deleted to be able to provide this humanitarian aid. The government incentives did not cover the loss, private donation was also important.
- The family support service dealt with the children as well. Besides, some cultural programs were organized for the refugees, like visits and guided tours at the Fil'akovo Castle and Museum geosite.
- The planning of a new project (*Enjoy Park*) started last year to develop the main geosites and visitor facilities of the NN UGGp,
- During the EGN Volcano Day on June 1 outdoor programs targeted the geohazards.

Strategic partnership

- The refugee crisis strengthened the cooperation amongst the stakeholders of the geopark, new partners surfaced for the humanitarian aid.
- Co-operation with the Slovak and the Hungarian National Geopark Commissions and state nature conservation agencies, beside municipalities and county officials were increased, helping the last year's UNESCO revalidation mission too.
- Further help was given to the aspirant Bükk-region Geopark, linked to common projects.
- Project partnerships with stakeholders helped gaining some EU funds for conservation purposes

Promotional activities

- Participation in the events of the stakeholders and partners of the NN UGGp.
- Presentations during various country events for the general public and specialists.
- Several press releases, social media presence and publishing printed material

4. CONTACTS

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