

GEOTOURIST MAP: COMMUNICATION BETWEEN GEOSTAFF AND TOURISTS

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Since 2003 knowledge is accumulated concerning the making and using of geotourist maps in Hungary. It involved both large-scale and medium-scale maps. The latest contribution is published in 2018 about a small area of the Balaton Uplands as a large-scale 1:30k geological hiking map. The aspects of making, using and disseminating geotourist maps are demonstrated through the workflow of this map, but experience with previously published cartographic materials is also built in our study. The genre of geotourist map combines the characteristics of traditional tourist maps and geological/geomorphological maps. Its scale varies from large to middle and there exist several subdivisions. Categories can be created based on the scale and the thematic content. Furthermore, from the aspects of use and make, we can also define key characteristics. These distinctions are valid either using paper-based or digital maps on a portable device. Large scale maps (approximately between 5k and 50k) are ideal to represent natural and artificial phenomena on their true shape, extent and location. Thus, their main use is assisting map users on the field. Medium scale (50-500k) maps however, depict objects in a generalized way making them ideal for overviewing an area (e.g. planning a car trip). From the aspect of making these maps, there lie several differences in the compilation process, concerning mainly the source data for the thematic overlays and the topographic contents. For example, while medium scale maps can be compiled from existing materials, creating a large scale map should include firsthand field data about geosites and other landmarks. The selection of the proper geosites to be depicted on the map has a high priority, because they play important role in the dissemination of knowledge to the visitors of the concerned area. While on medium scale maps only the most well-known geosites are placed, the large scale maps should contain lesser-known sites as well, which have to be selected throughout a geosite assessment process. Selecting the best geosites for the map is a combination of geometrical and qualitative approaches (e.g. filtering out the small or not representative objects). The remaining landmarks have to be close to tourist facilities, but they also have to possess scenic and scientific importance. The compilation stages of a geotourist map are as follows: (1) source map research in paper-based and online archives and in scientific papers; (2) GIS processing of the collected information; (3) field survey/field verification; (4) geosite assessment modeling/site selection; (5) cartographic visualization. Our latest 30k map was created for hikers who are interested in geology, and carefully crafted to depict both thematic and topographic content in the most comprehensive way. The area is part of the Bakony-Balaton UNESCO Geopark, one of the best known Hungarian protected areas. The Park area includes the shores of Lake Balaton, the largest lake in Central Europe which is a frequented tourist destination. The staff of the Geopark organize tours to the well-known sites, and are keen to illustrate their presentations with maps.