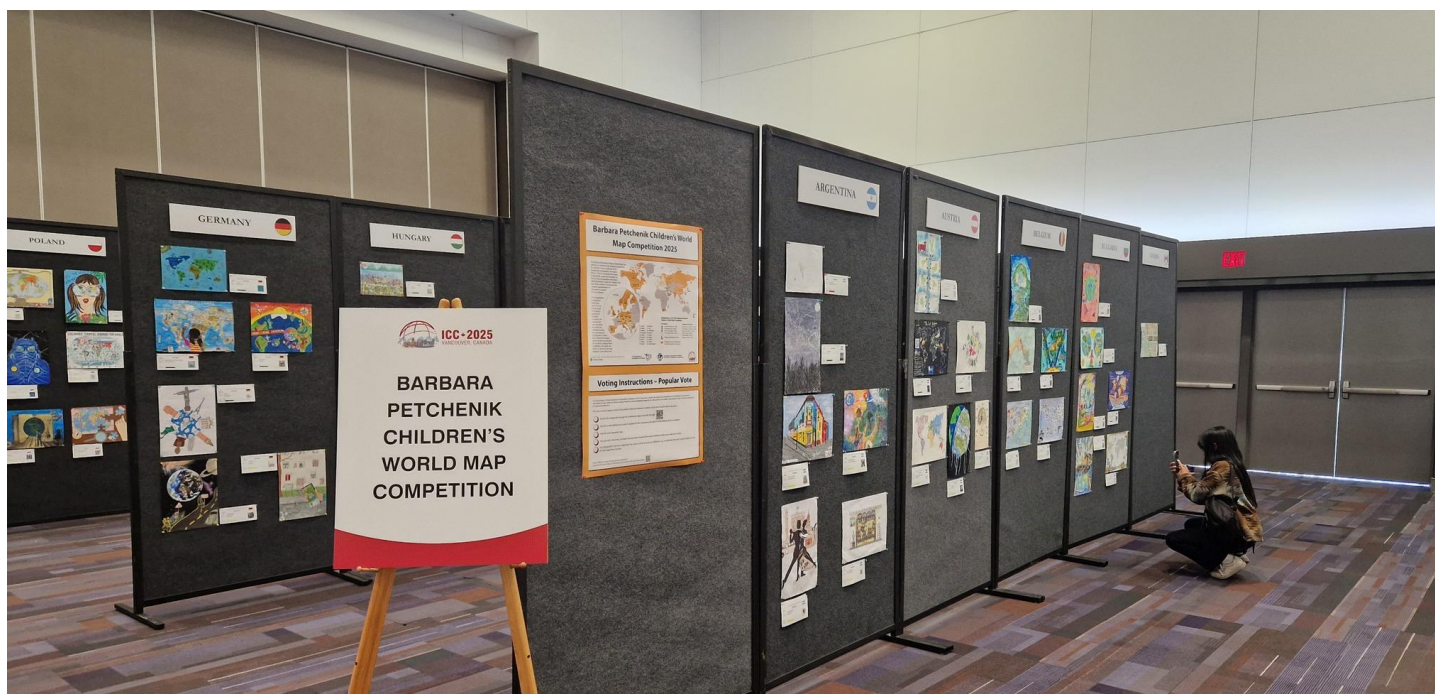




Commission on Cartography and Children

International Cartographic Association

NEWSLETTER



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COMPETITION 2027**

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THEME FOR THE BARBARA PETCHENIK COMPETITION 2027

The theme for the **Barbara Petchenik Competition 2027** will remain “**Maps in Everyday Life**”, the same theme used for the 2025 competition. The theme is retained for two successive competitions before being changed.

The updated rules were discussed at the Commission meeting held on 16 June 2026 in Nessebar, Bulgaria. During the meeting, proposals submitted to the Commission by national coordinators and members from several countries were also reviewed and considered. There will be no major changes to the competition rules compared with 2025. The age groups will remain unchanged, and the 2027 competition will be organized in a similar way to previous editions.



The updated rules for the Barbara Petchenik Competition 2027, approved by the ICA Executive Committee, will be available on the ICA website in September 2026.

BARBARA PETCHENIK CHILDREN'S MAP COMPETITION ACTIVITIES IN KENYA

As part of the activities for the Barbara Petchenik Children's Map Competition, introductory sessions are being organized in schools across Kenya to inspire young learners and introduce them to the world of maps and cartography.

The first introductory session at Karugia Primary School, Kenya, introduced learners to the competition and the fundamentals of cartography. The session engaged 45 learners from Grades 5–9, who participated enthusiastically in discussions about maps and the purpose of cartography. The next sessions will focus on introducing map design principles and supporting learners as they begin developing their competition entries.

These outreach activities are being coordinated through GeoClubs, a school-based initiative established by GeoSisters. GeoSisters is an organization founded by a team of young geospatial professionals and recent graduates committed to inspiring and empowering women and children to explore opportunities in the geosciences, geospatial, and space sectors. GeoClubs was created to introduce these fields to learners at an early age, fostering curiosity, creativity, and innovation.

To date, GeoClubs has been established in three schools, with the Barbara Petchenik Competition forming one of its flagship activities. Together with National Coordinator

Catherine Njore, the initiative will continue these sessions by introducing learners to cartography and guiding them through the map-making process as they prepare their submissions.



Highlights from the session at Karugia Primary School

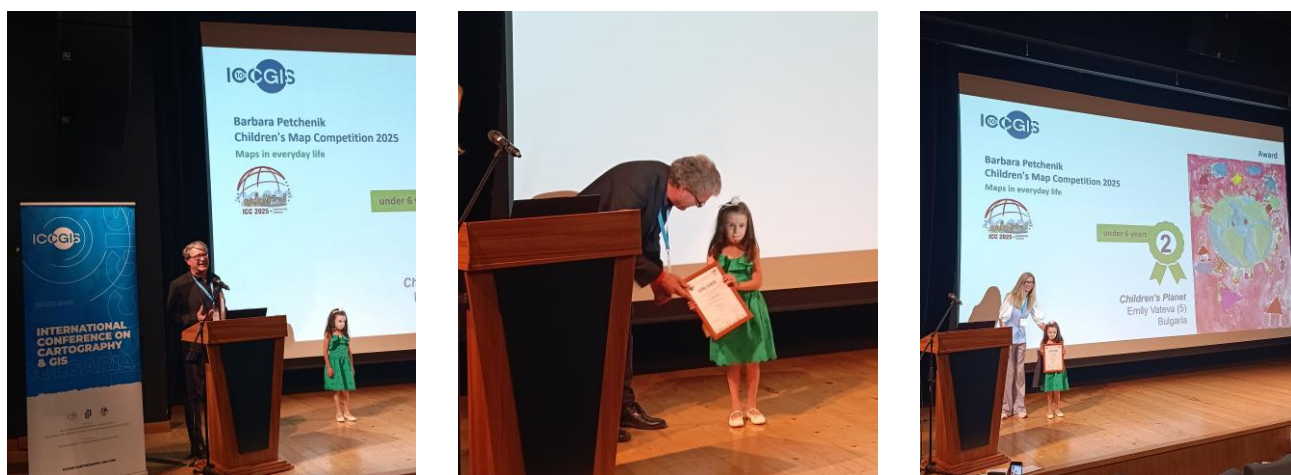
As more schools are engaged, the practical realities many learners face are also becoming increasingly evident. For some, even basic materials such as drawing books, paper, and coloring supplies are not readily available, despite their eagerness to participate. Reaching additional schools and ensuring that every interested child has the opportunity to take part will require continued support and resources as the initiative grows.

Text and images contributed by

Annstella Muthoni
Geosisters Hub - Founder
Local coordinator BPC

MEET AN AWARD-WINNING CHILD - BARBARA PETCHENIK COMPETITION 2025

Talented young artist Emily Vateva from Sofia, Bulgaria, who was awarded second place in the first age group (up to 6 years) in the 2025 Barbara Petchenik Competition (BPC), received her certificate during the opening ceremony of the 10th International Conference on Cartography and GIS, held from 14–19 June 2026 in Nessebar, Bulgaria. The award was personally presented by Prof. Georg Gartner, President of the International Cartographic Association.



Emily Vateva receiving her 2025 BPC certificate from ICA President Georg Gartner during the opening ceremony of the 10th International Conference on Cartography and GIS in Nessebar, Bulgaria

Emily is a student at Bluess Art Studio in Sofia, where she continues to develop her artistic talent with enthusiasm, creativity and inspiration. Her international success follows her first-place award in the 2025 Bulgarian national round of the Barbara Petchenik Competition, where her artwork, "Children's Planet," won in the category for the youngest participants (under 6). Emily's achievement is a wonderful example of how creativity and imagination can inspire children to explore and express their vision of the world through art and cartography.

We wish Emily and all the young artists who took part in the Barbara Petchenik Competition continued inspiration, courage, and the confidence to dream big and bring their creative ideas to life.

COMMISSION MEETING | JUNE 2026, BULGARIA

The Commission on Cartography and Children held its annual meeting on 16 June 2026 during the 10th International Conference on Cartography and GIS, 14-19 June 2026, Nessebar, Bulgaria.

During the meeting, the Commission's recent activities were discussed, with particular attention to the challenges of continuing the Children Map the World series, organizing the Barbara Petchenik Competition, and making minor revisions to its rules for the 2027 edition.



Meeting of the ICA Commission on Cartography and Children, Nessebar, Bulgaria - June 2026

We would like to thank all members and colleagues who attended the Commission meeting, as well as those who submitted their proposals and comments in advance. These discussions and contributions are essential to the continued development of the Commission's activities.

SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS ON CARTOGRAPHY AND CHILDREN

In recent months, Commission members and colleagues have had the opportunity to present their research in sessions focusing on education, cartography and children at several international events. The contributions explored historical aspects of cartography, critical thinking and generative AI, machine learning and geospatial studies, digital geography teaching, and competency-based education. The presentations highlighted the growing role of technology in shaping new methods of teaching and learning in geography and cartography.



Session on Education, Cartography and Children at the 10th International Conference on Cartography and GIS, June 2026

UPCOMING EVENTS

EuroCarto 2026

ICA Regional Cartographic Conference
Brno, Czechia, 8-11 September 2026
eurocarto2026.org

13th Congress of Cartographic Science (Congreso de la Ciencia Cartográfica)

ICA Endorsed Conference. Organized by the Centro Argentino de Cartografía virtual, Argentina, 6-8 October 2026
centroargentinodecartografia.org/congreso/

First International Conference Cartography and Modernity 2026

ICA Endorsed Conference. Organized by the Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University and the Georgian Cartographers Association
Tbilisi, Georgia, 29-31 October 2026
cam2026.tsu.ge

33rd International Cartographic Conference

Warsaw, Poland, 18-23 July 2027

15 October 2026: Submission system opens
20 November 2026: Full paper submission deadline
1 December 2026: Abstract submission deadline
1 February 2027: Submissions acceptance notification
15 March 2027: Early bird registration and payment deadline
15 May 2027: Registration and payment deadline



Submission Guidelines

Format: Abstracts (1–2 pages) or full papers (8 pages) in English.
Templates: Submissions must follow the official ICA templates.
Presentation: Accepted works will be presented in English as either an oral presentation or a poster.

icc2027.org



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Next Newsletter: December 2026

All commission members are invited to contribute to the next newsletter's content. They can send any news related to cartography and children (publications, national events, teaching activities, etc).

The news sent by commission members and colleagues reflects their personal opinions and positions, or those of the countries they represent, and does not necessarily reflect the position of ICA as an international scientific organization.

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