



IWIC XI

11th International Workshop on Ice Caves

Ghețar, Romania, February 8-14, 2026



Aim

IWICs are a series of workshops dedicated to the study of ice caves, held biannually since 2004. The first workshop was organized in Căpuș (Romania), in 2004, and subsequent ones were held in Demanovská Dolina (Slovakia, 2006), Perm (Russia, 2008), Obertraun (Austria, 2010), Grigna-Milan (Italy, 2012), Idaho Falls (USA, 2014), Postojna (Slovenia, 2016), Picos de Europa (Spain, 2018), Liptovský Mikuláš (Slovakia, 2022) and Werfenweng (Austria, 2024). The main aim of the workshops is to offer a venue for sharing discoveries, questions and ideas related to the past and present occurrence of (perennial) ice in caves. For the first time, in 2026 the workshop will also feature work that addresses other, lesser-studied components of the global cryosphere, under threat by climate changes: rock glaciers, ice-cored moraines, mountain permafrost and glacierets and cold-adapted biologic communities.

Venue

The 11th IWIC will be held in Ghetar hamlet, Transylvania, Romania, in the vicinity of Scarisoara Ice Cave. The hamlet can be reached directly by car or by plane to the nearest airport (150 km) at Cluj-Napoca. The organizers will arrange transport by car from Cluj-Napoca to the venue (on February 8) and back (on February 14). We have reserved Pensiunea Scarisoara for the workshop and accommodation and additional rooms at the nearby Cabana Ghetari. The two places are 100 m from each other, and 25 minutes away (on foot) from Scarisoara Ice Cave.



Format and program

The workshop will be organized as a hybrid meeting, with presentations, fieldwork and cave visits combined. Apart from presentations, participants will be working on different ice caves-related projects in Scarisoara Ice Cave. These include climate monitoring, geomorphologic mapping, faunal studies, ice/water/calcite sampling and geophysical measurements; however, all participants are free to propose studies to be conducted in the cave during the meeting. The schedule and daily program are as follows:

Sun (Feb 08)	Arrival in Ghetar or in Cluj-Napoca, transfer to Ghetar (departure at around 16.00)
Mon (Feb 09)	Introduction, oral and poster presentations
Tue-Thu (Feb 10-12)	Morning - visits and work in Scarisoara Ice Cave (details below) Evening – daily presentations, discussions and roundtables on different topics (cave climate, ice dynamics, paleoclimatology etc)
Fri (Feb 13)	Surface karst-themed field trip (1/2 day), workshop wrap-up with discussions on future studies, publications strategy etc.
Sat (Feb 14)	Departure from Ghetar, transfer to Cluj-Napoca (arrival at ~12.00)

Accommodation

Accommodation is available in single, double or triple rooms. We encourage accommodation in double rooms, as the number of available places is limited. Several rooms have the bathroom outside the main room. These will be occupied last. The costs are detailed in the table below. Breakfast is homemade buffet and dinner is a three-course menu (soup, second dish and desert). Vegetarian and vegan menus are also offered. Other meal options (e.g., lactose or fructose free) can be arranged, please notify us of any intolerances in advance.

	Cost per night per person
Single room	€ 36
Double room	€ 18
Triple room	€ 14
	Cost per day per person
Breakfast and dinner	€ 20

Cave visit

The upper part of Scarisoara is a show cave. The ice body is located in the Great Hall, at the bottom of a 47 m deep shaft, equipped with metal stairs and lighting. From the Great Hall, we will descend towards the Church, the Great Reservation and the Little Reservation using single-rope technique. Visiting the Church and the Great Reservation is done along ice walls inclined between 30 and 60 degrees and requires harness, ascender and crampons (i.e., we will be descending/ascending on foot and use the rope for security, only). The descent/ascent on the rope in the Church is ~5 m and in the Great Reservation is ~15 m. Visiting the Little Reservation requires a 15 m vertical descent/ascent, using SRT equipment. We will spend ~ 6-8 hours per day in the cave (for three days), and will have lunches there (soup, sandwiches, coffee and tea). Helmet with electric light is required. The temperature will be between +2 °C in the hottest part and between -5 and -15 °C in the Great Hall (depending on external air temperature). The organizers will provide ropes, but participants must bring their own helmet with light (s), crampons and SRT equipment.

Families

The meeting is family-friendly – please feel free to bring families. Children are especially welcomed. While we will not have dedicated staff on site, the entire workshop will be held in one pension, children will be present and free to mingle with us. Children can visit the cave under their parents' supervision.



Abstracts and registration

Participants wishing to present (oral or poster) are asked to submit a one page abstract by **November 20, 2025**. The abstract (free format) should include the usual suspects: title, authors, affiliations, and main text. Participation without presentation is possible, but registration is required.

Information required for registration:

1. Name, surname, affiliation
2. Title of presentation (if any)
3. Presentation preference (oral, poster, oral in cave)
4. Travel – means (car, plane, bus, train, submarine etc), arrival and departure dates
5. Accommodation type – single, double, triple
6. Dietary requirements
7. Other info one might find relevant

The steps for registering are as follows:

1. Submit the registration form and the abstract by email to Aurel Persoiu (aurel.persoiu@gmail.com)
2. Pay the registration fee
3. Buy garlic, silver and crosses – this is Transylvania.

Publication

The organizers are preparing a special issue entitled “*The lesser-known cryosphere – ice caves, rock glaciers, ice-cored moraines and glacierets*”, to be submitted for approval to the journal, The Cryosphere. The decision will be communicated in due time.

Registration fees

The registration fee is **EUR 150**. It covers workshop materials, transportation from Cluj-Napoca to Ghetar and back (on February 8th and 14th – details will be sent to registered participants), ice breaker, lunches in Ghetar and in the cave, refreshments during coffee breaks and in the cave. The organizers are applying for funding from the International Association of Cryospheric Sciences and the International Glaciological Society. If successful, the funds will be used to partially cover the costs of student participants as well as offer a prize for the best student paper. Further information will be available in late October 2025.

The registration fee has to be paid by wire transfer (bank details below) during registration.

IBAN: RO35BTRL03404201E60830XX

Bank Name: Banca Transilvania

SWIFT: BTRLRO22

Account holder: Aurel Persoiu

Insurance

The organizers of the event do not accept liability for the payment of any cost or compensation that may arise from damage to or loss of personal property, or from illness, injury, disability or death of a participant while he/she is travelling to and from or attending the course, and it is clearly understood that each participant undertakes full responsibility for such coverage. Participants would be well advised to take out insurance against any risks.



Organizers



Aurel Persoiu, Emil Racoviță Institute of Speleology, Romanian Academy



Nenad Buzjak, University of Zagreb, Croatia



Sanda Iepure, Babes-Bolyai University, Romania



Christos Pennos, Aristotle University, Greece

See more: <https://sites.google.com/view/iwic-xi/home>

Contact: Aurel Persoiu (aurel.persoiu@gmail.com)

The photos below give a taste of the workshop. The photos were taken during previous meetings in the same format, held in 2022, 2023 and 2024 at Scarisoara Ice Cave.

