



5th INTERNATIONAL CONGRESSES OF SPELEOLOGY IN ARTIFICIAL CAVITIES



The Hypogea 2026 International Congress will be held in Tbilisi, Georgia, from 22 to 26 September 2026, under the patronage of the Union Internationale de Spéléologie (UIS). The first four International Congresses of Speleology in Artificial Cavities (HYPOGEA) were successfully held in Rome, Italy (2015); Cappadocia, Turkey (2017); Dobrich, Bulgaria (2019); and Genoa, Italy (2023).

The primary objective of the congress is to exchange knowledge and experience acquired at both the international and national levels in the field of speleological research on artificial caves (works of anthropogenic origin and of archaeological-historical significance). It also aims to promote the underground historical and cultural heritage, to safeguard it, and to foster its sustainable use.

Traditionally, HYPOGEA congresses are hosted in countries where important complexes of artificial caves are widespread and where there is a longstanding scholarly tradition in the study of these cultural and historical monuments. For this reason, it was decided to hold *Hypogea 2026* in Tbilisi, Georgia - a country renowned for its magnificent complexes of rock-cut monuments, such as Uplistsikhe, Vardzia, the cave monasteries of David Gareji, and many others. Their systematic investigation has been underway for more than a century, conducted by both Georgian and international scholars. In addition to attending significant academic presentations, participants of the Tbilisi congress will have the opportunity to visit some of these remarkable rock-hewn complexes, along with other monuments of Georgian cultural heritage. It is hoped that the participants will also enjoy and appreciate the world-renowned Georgian hospitality.

The event will be organized by the National Museum of Georgia, the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia, the Georgian National Academy of Sciences, and Ilia State University (Tbilisi). The congress will be supported by the Tbilisi City Hall, as well as by the regional administrations of *Shida Kartli* and *Kakheti*. In addition, it will benefit from the fundamental support of the foundations *International Cultural Space* and *Tsinapari*.

The congress aims to advance and strengthen the exchange of experiences and information in the field of artificial cavities at the international level. Simultaneous translation into Georgian and English will be provided throughout the sessions. The three days of the congress will be dedicated to the presentation of studies conducted in different countries, while two days will focus on guided excursions to sites of particular interest, including artificial cavities and related cultural monuments.

Rules for Abstract Submission

Proposed contributions, written in English, must concern unpublished studies (or updated results from major research campaigns) relating to artificial cavities and associated topics. Abstracts must be submitted in English, without illustrations, and in **word.docx** format. They must not exceed 3,500 characters, including spaces and keywords. Each abstract must include:

- the title of the paper,
- the names of the authors,
- the designation of the corresponding author, together with their email address and telephone contact information.

The relevant thematic session must be indicated in brackets under the title. The Organizing Committee will be responsible for the scheduling and distribution of the presentations. Each proposal will be reviewed by one or more members of the Scientific Committee, who will determine whether the presentation is to be delivered orally or as a poster. In the case of rejection, the corresponding author will be notified promptly.

Thematic Sessions

- Underground and rocky civil settlement works
- Religious and cult works
- Architecture and urban planning
- Archaeological research of artificial cavities
- Ancient hydraulic works
- Mining and extraction works
- New technologies for analyzing and documenting artificial cavities
- Categories and types of artificial cavities: updates

Contacts

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Deadlines:

Abstract submission:	1 March 2026
Send definitive contribution:	30 June 2026
Early subscription:	30 June 2026
Registration deadline for speakers:	31 July 2026

We look forward to seeing you in Tbilisi, Georgia

Best wishes

The Organising Committee