

Preface to the VGI Special Issue

The Austrian Geodetic Commission (ÖGK) is the national organisation in Austria adhering to the International Association of Geodesy (IAG), one of the eight associations of the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics (IUGG).

The 26th General Assembly of IUGG will take place in Prague, Czech Republic, June 22nd to July 2nd, 2015. Every four years IAG and the other associations within IUGG present the work performed during this General Assembly. It is also used to review and adapt the structure where necessary and appoint officers for the coming period.

ÖGK has decided to contribute to this General Assembly with a collection of research papers of Austrian institutions related to geodesy.

The main task of this special issue of the *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Vermessung & Geoinformation (VGI)* is to give the international geodetic research community an idea about the various topics Austrian geodesists are working on. Additionally, this scientific work should be cumulatively shown to those Austrian colleagues who are mainly involved in practical and administrative work. The variety of research topics indicates how closely geodesy is related to its neighbouring disciplines within IUGG such as, e.g., geophysics, but also to other fields like geoinformation science and computer science. Joint efforts in different fields are required to achieve the goals serving our society, such as precise navigation on Earth, a thorough understanding of 'System Earth', or the sustainable use of natural resources.

With 12 papers this special issue of VGI is more than only snapshot of the geodetic research work carried out in Austria, but also gives insight into research programs and trends. The authors come from the Technische Universität Wien and Graz University of Technology, both offering the full educational programme in geodesy and geoinformation, as well as the Federal Office of Metrology and Surveying (BEV), the Space Research Institute (IWF) of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, and their research partners.

I am particularly grateful to the four guest-editors of this issue, Hana Krásná, Franz Rottensteiner, Werner Lienhart and Manfred Wieser. All papers of this issue were peer-reviewed by experts in the respective field. This ensures the quality of the published articles. Thus, I also want to thank all reviewers for their useful comments and constructive remarks.

On behalf of all authors and the four guest-editors I would like to acknowledge the Austrian Society of Geodesy and Geoinformation (OVG) for providing this platform for the publications. In particular we are grateful to the editor-in-chief of the VGI, Andreas Pammer, and his two deputy editors, Ernst Zahn and Georg Topf, for taking care of the layout of the papers and solving all technical problems. Finally, I want to extend my sincere gratitude to Norbert Höggerl, Secretary of the Austrian Geodetic Commission. His support was essential for the entire process of publishing this special issue for the IUGG General Assembly.

Norbert Pfeifer

*President of the Austrian Geodetic Commission
Technische Universität Wien,
Department of Geodesy and Geoinformation*