



**egea**

# **Policy Paper**

**2023/2024**

## Introduction

This policy paper reflects the topics that will be the focus of the elected Board of EGEA and Regional Teams for 2023/2024. It highlights the goals that we will try and achieve throughout the year. In general, we will try and stabilise the organisation after it has restarted and reshaped the past year. As some of the effects covid had on EGEA are still present, we will aim to further change the organisation to be more resilient. We want to tackle the main focus point on various levels, such as financial stability, inclusion, communication, restructuring of the regions, and other structural changes and more.

## Contributors

### Board of EGEA 2023/2024

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### Regional Contact Persons 2023/2024

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## List of acronyms

AC - Annual Congress
BoE - Board of EGEA
CoC - Code of Conduct
CP - Contact Person
EGEA - European Geography Association
EGEA <sup>n</sup> - A person who is part of EGEA
GA - General Assembly
OSM - Organisation and Strategy Meeting
RCP - Regional Contact Person
SOSM - Summer Organisation and Strategy Meeting
WOSM - Winter Organisation and Strategy Meeting

# Structure and internal Communication

## Regional Restructuring of EGEA's regions

The past EGEA year the working group including EGEA members, the RCP's and members of the BoE has been working on the regional restructuring of EGEA. The goal was to prepare a proposal which included the introduction of EGEA's new structure which consists of **three individual regions** instead of four. The aim was to balance the distribution of entities per region and ease the pressure on the remaining active entities of smaller regions. The restructuring of the proposed reduced regions will help to ensure that Regional Congresses, Newbie Weekends and more can successfully take place. This year we will **create a base** for the change coming into effect after the GA 2024. The working group will continue preparing the restructuring and will further work on improving and strengthening the **transition process** and guarantee a transparent communication amongst official positions and EGEAns. Upcoming changes that the restructuring brings are for example the reduced number of Regional Congresses as well as Regional Teams and the balanced amount of entities per region. The restructuring will still play a big part at the upcoming Winter and Summer Organisation and Strategy meetings. We invite everyone interested in continuing working on solutions regarding the restructuring to join the working group.

## Evaluation of the Restructuring of the BoE

The restructuring of the Board of EGEA, increasing from five individuals to six, came into effect at the last GA in Szentendre 2022. Since then the position of the EPRA was split into two separate official positions to ease the pressure on the respective board members. This year's officials will **evaluate** the restructuring of the BoE by assessing the **evenness of the workload and task division** in order to advance and enhance the definition of areas of responsibility.

## Internal Communication

We want to continue the **transparent, concise and frequent communication between the BoE and all members**. We will publish the minutes of our meetings and want to summarise them in an extra document. The document will contain a summary of the main points of the meeting. It will be published and should simplify the transmission of information on the main topics. We aim to reach more EGEAns in an easily accessible way to inform them in a short amount of time about important news. Additionally, we shall encourage and assist our Regional Teams and Teams, Projects, and Working Groups in maintaining their open communication and transparency with our members too.

## Regional Matters

In the wake of the Covid pandemic, we want to foster closer connections through live interregional gatherings to **strengthen the relationship between the different bodies of EGEA**. We intend to promote the hosting of live CP Trainings and Newbie Weekends. By doing so, EGEA can ensure the equitable distribution of significant annual events across all regions, enhancing the opportunities for entities to maintain their regional engagement.

Looking ahead, our strategic focus also encompasses the **expansion of EGEA's network**. This includes the vital task of identifying and nurturing new entities, as well as strengthening struggling ones. By channelling our efforts into these endeavours, we can extend our support to isolated entities, helping them integrate more within the larger EGEA community. To aid in this pursuit, we are excited to leverage the capabilities of the revitalised **EGEA Reach Beyond Working Group**. This working group will play an important role in executing outreach initiatives and ensuring a cohesive approach towards expanding the EGEA network.

In the upcoming year, we intend to tackle the issue of knowledge transfer to CPs. If the GA approves, our plan involves **incorporating mandatory CP Briefings**. These briefings will serve the purpose of addressing the knowledge gap among CPs and providing them with essential information about the Support Fund and related matters.

## Entity Matters

The preceding year was full of events organised by entities throughout Europe, serving as exceptional opportunities for entities and their members to **gain experience in event organisation and cultivate practical skills**. It is crucial that we persist in creating an atmosphere that encourages entities to maintain this level of engagement, inspiring them to create such events as platforms for newbies to meet other EGEAns and experience the spirit of EGEA. To ensure the professional execution and promotion of these events, it is necessary for the organisers to receive support from Regional Teams and the Event Advisor.

Equally vital is to **enhance knowledge transfer between newbies and experienced EGEAns**, recognising that newbies might possess limited insight into the administrative procedures and organisational framework of EGEA. To equip them with the essential knowledge to sustain their entities, we regularly update CP manuals as an addition to the Newbie Booklet.

## Teams, Projects & Working groups

As the process of change to the structure of the Teams, Projects and Working Groups is constantly relevant, their current situation will be **regularly assessed and adjusted** if further changes are required. In terms of communication and efficiency we strive to foster **cooperation** amongst those who share similar responsibilities, matters and challenges, as well as with the Board of EGEA and the Regional Contact Persons. Regular meetings will be held to put this into practice. Our goal is to increase the visibility of the Teams, Projects and Working Groups both within the association and externally as well as attracting more EGEAns by making their work more appealing.

## Awareness and inclusion

Through the Geography Awareness Week and Theme Year, we want to highlight topics related to geography. We encourage entities to organise thematic workshops and include the **Theme Year 2024 topic, agrifuture**, in upcoming congresses. Our goal is to improve our geographical identity by talking about the different topics we deal with in our everyday lives, such as spatial planning, GIS, physical geography, tourism and topics related to climate change.

We will continue raising awareness about climate change as the main goal of the EGEA Climate Policy Paper and promote it within the organisation. Following the Green book, we will continue to raise awareness in reducing one's carbon footprint and encourage slow and sustainable travel. The Science Team and their activities can increase the **significance of geography as a science**.

We strive to be an organisation that talks about various problems and crises such as the war in Europe and **help vulnerable entities** and geographers in Ukraine through support from other EGEAns. By developing communication between regions and entities we want to support our open-minded and tolerant association which thinks about the future, learns from the past and lives in the present to face all of the challenges that will be in front of us in the next EGEA year. We encourage entities to organise charity events to gather money to support EGEAns affected by war.

EGEA is an organisation which ensures that it is **accessible and inclusive to all** who wish to join the organisation or its activities. We achieve this by aiding with the financial costs of attending official events through the Support Fund, ensuring our members have a safe environment to express themselves and enjoy the events through the Code of Conduct (CoC) and the Inclusion Team, which discusses strategies to increase inclusivity. We continue to encourage event organisers to take time to implement the CoC to offer a safe environment to all participants. The anonymously communicated concerns will be managed by the RCPs.

EGEA is a safe space where people can discuss ideas, travel Europe, discover new cultures, grow as a person and have fun. The wellbeing of its members is a major priority for EGEA and thus we want to ensure that EGEA will stay fun for its members. We will try to continuously **raise awareness for the importance of a healthy**

**Work-Life-EGEA-balance**, especially for positions with a higher workload. We want people to know it is always okay to seek professional help or help to reduce your working load.

## Activities

### Congresses

In the past years it became more difficult to find entities who are willing to organise a congress. Therefore, the BoE will try to find new organisers with an active approach. After looking for **potential organising entities**, these **will be approached directly** and encouraged to apply. During this process it must become clear that the entity is able to manage taking on the task. The goal is to help the entities make an informed decision. This should also involve establishing contact with previous congress organisers. We will encourage organising entities to establish contact with the Finance Team early on. If no suitable organisers can be found, alternative solutions will be considered so the regional meeting can still take place.

### Administrative Events

Traditionally, EGEA's Organisation and Strategy Meetings are held in Winter (WOSM) and Summer (SOSM) and this year shall be the same. The WOSM will be held at the end of November/beginning of December and the SOSM at the end of June/beginning of July. As part of the internal redistribution of tasks within the Board, the communication with the organising entities and the planning of the working sessions will be managed by the Event Advisor with the President serving as backup.

## Finances

We are committed to continuing the work of EGEA 2.0 in order to **secure long term financial stability in EGEA**, making our association resilient against future incidents. We will continue the effort to secure new long term financial partners. The Board will **collaborate closely with the Finance Team** on this topic, as they already have a list of



potential sponsors. The Board also intends to communicate with EGEA Alumni, as they might have direct connections to relevant organisations. The external visibility and branding of EGEA, as well as our strategy of approaching organisations, will be important in order to attract potential new partners. As EGEA 2.0 combines financial and PR strategy, the Board will strengthen our working relationship with the Finance Team to realise a clear vision for EGEA's branding and fundraising.

## PR and External representation

### EGEA Partners

The cooperation with our partners will be re-evaluated and our core partners will be determined. We will try to **extend the agreements** with them and emphasise the importance of the collaboration for both parties. To enhance EGEA mission, we will continue looking for new partners that are specialised in the geographic and scientific fields.

### Social media strategy

One of our main goals will be improving the external representation of EGEA to our sponsors and partners. Active social media presence and professionalisation will be our key focus point of the branding of EGEA. We will work on **increasing the reach and influence** through our social media channels. In cooperation with other officials of EGEA, we will create a social media strategy that will serve as a guideline for the next Public Relations Advisors as well as for the different bodies of EGEA.

### External communication

EGEA's representation is reliant on how partners and sponsors view our association. We aim to improve the professional contact with partners and sponsors by **increasing the science based outreach**. We want to highlight topics related to geography through showing scientific workshops, the Geography Awareness Week and Theme Year more in our media.