

european geography association for students and young geographers



**I am going to the congress**  
what to do ?

egea warszawa  
January 2003

## EGEA CONGRESSES

The EGEA congresses are organized:

- to get to know students from other universities
- to exchange knowledge and ideas
- to think creatively
- to find answers to problematic questions
- to visit different regions in Europe

and also to have a great time together.

Going to the congress we want to present our country, city, university and entity to the other EGEA members as well as make new contacts and friends.

The European Association of Geography organises its congresses twice a year:

- in spring (March- April) - four Regional Congresses (one for each region)
- in autumn (September- October) - Annual Congress

Regional Congresses last usually 4 days and there are about 50 participants. The Annual Congress takes more time (e. g. 6 days) and there are over 80 EGEA members taking part in. Each entity has a contact person who is responsible for gathering all application forms for congresses and sending them to the organisers before the deadline. Sometimes not everyone who is eager can go to the congress. Then the "waiting list" is made.

## WHAT TO TAKE

- pictures from your country/ city/ region (postcards, photos, slides, maps)
- the national flag
- your entity T- shirt
- music from your country
- traditional dishes or drinks
- other things you wish and which will promote your country

Congress organizers may also ask you to bring some special things, materials.

## LANGUAGE

The official language of the EGEA is English. All events: Opening and Closing Ceremony, workshops and guiding on excursions are in this language.

## THE CONGRESS FEE

The congress fee includes: accommodation , catering, excursions, materials for workshops and advertising goods. Usually participants receive a Congress T- shirt that is also included in the fee. Sometimes the T- shirt can be bought separately, which can make the fee lower. The participants cover transfer expenses.

## WELCOME!

Each congress begins with registration connected with paying the fee. After that you receive an ID and an original congress T-shirt. IDs are very useful when you get to know other participants.

## WORKSHOPS

Workshops are the main part of the congress. It is the hosts who decide how many workshops there will be and what they will deal with. Every congress has its own motto. Leading ideas of 2003 congresses were as follows:

Tartu "Reality and visions: Welcome to Estonia"

Mytilene "Out of the map: Local geographies of a Mediterranean island"

Berlin "Expectations of Growth"

Krakow "

Usually there is one or two organizers who are leaders of the workshop. The workshop lasts from one up to three days. Usually about 15 people take part in the task and it is crucial to get on well very quickly. Mostly leaders are students and post graduated students, but it may happen that they are lead by students from familiar faculties (geology, ethnography, biology). During workshops the topic is discussed from many points of view, participants take part in discussion; sometimes make projects, questionnaires, posters, taking part in excursion, sometime do field research. At the end of the congress each workshop's group presents conclusions of their work to the others participants. Presentation can be made as a poster, drama etc. It is important to be methodically prepared to be active during discussions.

Beside scientific field, workshops are also good opportunity to pick up some acquaintances, which may end up as unforgettable exchanges.

## EXCURSIONS

There are excursions organised during the congress. Usually there are some trips connected with the workshops and one bigger, one- day one for all of the participants. These excursions are opportunity to visit unique, interesting places, access to which sometimes requires special permissions. You can see e.g. power plant, building site, caves or local administration centres.

## THE NATIONAL EVENING

There is a custom that each entity prepares a presentation of their country/ region/ city. One evening everybody gathers to watch the shows. Each group has about 20 minutes (or more if they convince the organizers). You can show and do everything including common singing of wide known tunes or songs typical for your country, or dancing some folk dances. You can also tell something about your faculty and show some slides from the field research. But remember: the most important is to have fun and not to get bored.

All depends on the group's invention and creativity. That is why it is good when people who are going to the congress are assertive, active, out- going, friendly, fluent in foreign languages (especially in English, which is the official language of EGEA). The congress is the best place to create ideas about international exchanges and to make first steps to work it out. Contacts made during the congress are better and stronger than those done via the Internet.

## REGIONAL MEETINGS

Meetings of members from all of 4 regions which take place during the Annual Congress are called Regional Meetings. They are lead by regional contact person chosen during the previous Annual Congress. They are held to render a report of the entities' activity, to deal with the current problems and to choose new regional contact person. Regional contact persons form EGEA's Board of Executives (BoE), which is behind the wheel for one year. They choose from among themselves: the chairman, the vice- chairman, the treasurer, the secretary and inform the others about this during GBM.

## THE GENERAL BOARD MEETING

The General Board Meeting is a meeting of all Annual Congress's participants. Lead by the outgoing chairman (or somebody on his behalf) is supposed to cope with annual reports, info about new BoE, and discussions on EGEA's protocol. During voting each entity taking part in Annual Congress and having the right to vote has only one vote no matter how many people from it there are on the congress.

## THE ANNUAL CONGRESS

There is also one more decision to be made during the GBM- who is going to organise the next Annual Congress. When there is more than one willing entity, a voting is held. The Annual Congress Coordinator becomes the fifth member of BoE.

## THE END

The hosts will provide you with a complete list of participants. That should enable you to keep friendships on. It is nice to invite other entities to your city or country, or offer help with putting someone up while being in your city on their way.

But the most important is to meet again and again and in this way keep EGEA living!