



EUGEO 2018 General Assembly
Saturday 14 April, 10:00 a.m. | Warsaw, Poland | Institute of Geography Polish Academy
of Sciences (Twarda Street 51/55)

Present:

Konrad Czapiewski (Polish Geographical Society)
Costin Diaconescu (Romanian Geographical Society)
Adrian Kavanagh (Geographical Society of Ireland)
Zoltán Kovács (Hungarian Geographical Society, EUGEO President)
Genovaitė Kynė (Lithuanian Geographical Society)
Zaiga Krisjane (Latvian Geographical Society)
Dovilė Krupickaitė (Lithuanian Geographical Society)
Rene Matlovic (Slovak Geographic Society)
Antoine Le Blanc (Comité National Français de Géographie)
Giacomo Pettenati (Italian Association of Geography Teachers)
Tadeusz Siwek (Czech Geographical Society)
Massimiliano Tabusi (Italian Geographical Society, and Associazione dei Geografi Italiani, EUGEO Secretary General, representing also Italian Society of Geographical Studies)
Christian Vandermotten (Royal Belgian Geographical Society)

Apologies from: Antoine Le Blanc (he attended the Seminar but was forced to leave because of unexpected family problems); Manuel Valenzuela.

1) Welcome, Announcements.

EUGEO President, Professor Zoltán Kovács, and EUGEO Secretary General, Professor Massimiliano Tabusi, welcome attendees to the General Assembly meeting, held in Warsaw adjoining the 100th Anniversary Celebrations of the Polish Geographical Society. The President warmly thanks Polish colleagues for the invitation and congratulates for the organization of the event. Introductions followed.

2) State-of-the arts and mid-term strategic plans.

To strengthen communication with EUGEO representatives and member societies the president believes it is useful to disseminate a President's letter (twice a year) that contains a summary of the main events related to EUGEO and other relevant geographical news. It is also desirable in the future to involve physical geography and geographers with non-human geography background in the work of EUGEO, possibly also with a colleague in the Executive Committee. Every member society is invited to communicate information about their most important events when they consider that these may be of international interest.

The President stressed that it is important to plan EUGEO events well in advance and communicate them efficiently in the community of geographers. He encouraged all member societies to consider the opportunity to organize an EUGEO Congress or Seminar in the future (the organization of a Seminar is much simpler than the Congress, nevertheless it is important for strategic coordination among member societies). It is also very important that the various events should be held always in different locations within Europe.

Another important point is the role of Treasurer. Some years ago, when the treasurer in office (Hans De Weert) ended his activities, the then President Henk Ottens had been asked by the General Assembly to act as treasurer, maintaining the EUGEO account in the Netherlands. This commitment has been realized with the support of KNAG with a small operating cost. For the future it is necessary to study alternative solutions. Moving the account can lead to complications and, if it becomes necessary, it would be preferable to do so towards a country in the Euro-zone. An optimal solution would be to have a representative of KNAG who could take over the treasurer's role; we're exploring this possible solution with the help of Henk Ottens and colleagues from KNAG.

As a small element of the increasing visibility of EUGEO, the Secretary General asks the courtesy to verify that the affiliation to EUGEO is present and visible on the web pages of the various member geographical societies and associations, possibly with the logo. During the discussion a proposal was made to activate a Facebook page of EUGEO. The Secretary General welcomed the suggestion and asked that each association should spread it and follow it when it is realized.

3) Minutes of the Meeting in Brussels, September 5th, 2017.

Minutes were approved as a correct record of the meeting.

4) EUGEO Annual Report 2018: Annual Report 2017, Activities and Policies 2018-2021.

The President notes that it is too early at this stage to start considering preparations for the 2018 Annual Report, and opens the discussion about the 2017 Report, that was approved. About Activities and Policies, considering that the "Night of Geography" initiative has been long discussed and unanimously appreciated during the Seminar, the General Assembly believes it is useful to repeat such an initiative in the future.

5) EUGEO Brussels Congress Financial Report.

On this topic the President gives the floor to Christian Vandermotten, who summarizes the state of the budget of the Brussels Congress. The balance shows a deficit of 12.500€, due essentially to the extra security costs that became necessary after the known attacks in Belgium. Among the budget items that led to a deficit there is probably also the low cost of the fees for the participants, and in particular for the early career researchers (as suggested by EUGEO GA and EC to maintain fees as low as possible, similarly to Rome and Budapest). Another budget item that had a certain weight was related to administrative expenses; the administrative service was operated by the KNAG. The deficit would create very serious problems to RBGS, that unfortunately is not able to refund EUGEO with the 12.500€ "seed money" (the same amount of the deficit) received before the Congress; for this reason RBGS requests, as an exceptional procedure, for an EUGEO support. A possible solution may be to share the deficit between 3 actors: RBGS, EUGEO and KNAG. RBGS should refund only 5.000€ to EUGEO; EUGEO may receive also 2.500€ from KNAG (which informally informed us that it will consider the proposal) as a form of support for early career researchers attending the Brussels Congress. This way the 12.500€ deficit should be divided as follows: € 5,000 falling at the expenses of EUGEO; € 5,000 for RBGS; € 2,500 for KNAG. Summarizing, considering that EUGEO has already anticipated the figure of € 12,500 to support the organization of the Congress, it will receive back € 5,000 from the RBGS and € 2,500 from the KNAG.

The General Assembly unanimously approves this arrangement. For the future it is emphasized that, for the next Congresses, it will be appropriate not to exceed the 5,000 € of seed money and it is important to consider that this deposit must be reimbursed after the congress: what is approved in this case cannot and should not be considered "a precedent" applicable to future Congresses.

6) EUGEO Financial Report 2018: Income and Expenses 2017, Balance Sheet 2016-2017, Budget 2018-2021.

The President presents the previously circulated Financial Report, the Income and Expenses 2017 and the balance sheet 2016-2017, that are unanimously approved with the budget 2018-2021. Considering the balance of the association's budget, the General Assembly decides to extend the suspension of annual fees payment for the period of 2018-2019. However, the General Assembly discusses the possibility that in future it will be necessary to restore fees for member societies or to identify new forms of EUGEO funding (one of the proposals was that the EUGEO budget can be financed with a small share of the registration fees of congress participants).

7) Composition of the Executive Committee

The President, as already emerged in the discussion in the preceding points, highlights the importance of identifying and involving a treasurer (who is possibly physical geographer) in the work of the Executive Committee. He therefore invites all EUGEO members to come up with possible candidates; the decision could hopefully be taken during the general assembly in Galway in 2019.

8) New applications for membership.

EUGEO received on April 4th the following application:

“The Norwegian Geographical Society (NGS) hereby applies for membership in EUGEO. NGS was founded in 1889 and currently has around 300 individual members. We hope that this application can be considered during the seminar in Warsaw in April. Unfortunately, we are not able to send any participant to this event at this stage.

On behalf of the Norwegian Geographical Society, Ivar Berthling, President”

The General Assembly unanimously accept the request. EUGEO President will contact Norwegian Geographical Society President communicating him the acceptance of NGS as new member of EUGEO and asking him to appoint a Norwegian representative for EUGEO.

9) Congresses and seminars.

Next planned EUGEO events are:

- a. EUGEO 2019 Congress and General Assembly, 15-18 May, Galway, Ireland
- b. EUGEO 2020 Seminar and General Assembly, date to be defined, Vilnius
- c. EUGEO 2021 Congress and General Assembly, Summer, Prague, Czech Republic
- d. EUGEO 2022 Seminar and General Assembly, Summer (Paris as possible candidate, probably in connection with IGU centennial Congress)

The President warmly invites every society to consider the organization of an EUGEO Congress and/or Seminar for 2023 and the following years, presenting a candidature.

10) Relationships with other organizations.

GA members consider very important to strengthen the cooperation with other geography related organizations (especially with IGU); the EC is asked to continue the collaboration with the IGU in the format identified during the IGU-EUGEO joint meeting, held in Brussels during the 2017 EUGEO Congress.

11) Next Congress and General Assembly Meeting in Galway, 2019.

Adrian Kavanagh (Geographical Society of Ireland) gives a short report about the preparations and plans of the EUGEO 2019 Congress in Galway. The Congress will be held jointly with the Irish Geographers Annual Congress, but the identity of EUGEO Congress and the "brand" of the

Association of Geographical Societies in Europe will emerge clearly and prominently. The General Assembly congratulates him and the Irish organizers for their work, hoping for a large participation of EUGEO associates at the Congress. The GA considers important that the registration fee for young researchers should be reasonable and accessible, as usual at EUGEO congresses.

12) Any other Business, Closing.

No other business to be discussed. The next General Assembly will be held in Galway, Ireland, during the 2019 EUGEO Congress. The President thanks Konrad Czapiewski and the local organizers for hosting the EUGEO seminar and the GA meeting in Warsaw at the Institute of Geography, Polish Academy of Sciences.