

European Geoparks Network

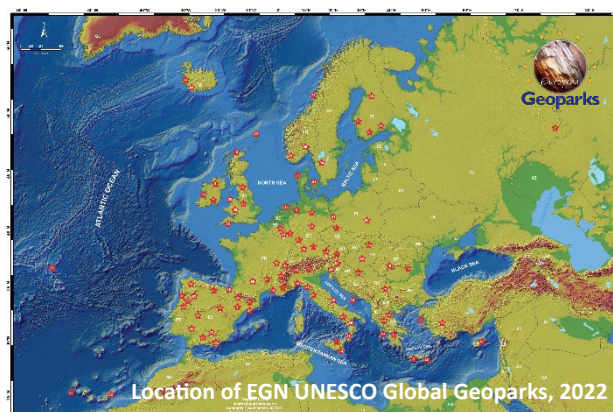
Activity Report 2022



In 2022 the European Geoparks Network continued to expand and comprised 94 institutional members drawn from 28 European countries. It is represented by 201 official delegates that are either EGN institutional or GGN honorary and individual members. The regional network builds on its long traditions of cooperation and sharing to contribute to the work of the Global Geoparks Network in Europe.

The EGN delegates met in two EGN Coordination Committee Meetings during which decisions were collectively taken about the evolving network. In 2022 this included the renewal of the EGN Advisory Committee members, the Coordinator and Vice Coordinator of the network. The EGN delegates warmly thanked the outgoing EGN Coordinator Kristin Ragnes, Gea-Norvegica UGGp, for the many years of commitment and hard work that she has given, and continues to give to Geoparks.

The European Geoparks Network was very active all year celebrating EGN week and international days, collaborating in working groups, communicating via its magazine, newsletters and on social media. An important event was the successful 16th European Geoparks Conference when 350 participants from UNESCO Global Geoparks, diverse partners and professionals met in Seisa Val Grande UGGp, Italy.



EGN Meetings

Spring EGN CC Meeting 28-30th April 2022: De Hondsrug UGGp, The Netherlands

This was the first meeting held in person since the COVID-19 pandemic. The EGN CC meeting in De Hondsrug UGGp was a very special occasion. The delegates of the EGN were warmly addressed by their hosts the De Hondsrug UGGp, the EGN, the GGN and UNESCO. Several proposals were adopted by the EGN CC delegates in plenary session:

1. To contribute to the GGN working groups: Geohazards, Geological heritage & geodiversity, Geodiversity and biodiversity, Climate change and SDGs, Tourism, Education, Island and coastal areas, Indigenous People, Communication, Cooperating members;

2. To approve the 2021 EGN Accounts;
3. To approve the EGN promotional fees to be invoiced by GGN in 2022;
4. To approve the EGN promotional fee was set at 500€ for 2022;
5. To approve the combined 2020 and 2021 EGN annual reports due to COVID disruption;
6. To amend the rules of operation so that the spring EGN CC is face-to-face meeting and the autumn EGN CC meeting is digital.

The afternoon session was dedicated to four thematic sessions organized as participative workshops: Climate adaptation and the role of the Geopark, Education on sustainability, Cooperation with entrepreneurs, Improving interpretation on geosites.

A half-day session took place on meeting day two. This open meeting was themed on the Common Interreg project, “UNESCO Global geopark cooperation between De Hondsrug and Terra Vita UGGp’s”. Different partners and stakeholders participated alongside the EGN delegates in a rich and diverse event. The talks and films were brought to a close with the launching of a new interactive mobile game that EGN CC delegates were able to experience.

The EGN CC meeting concluded in the afternoon on the second day with discussions of forthcoming meetings, the announcement of a bidding process to host the September 2024 EGN Conference and information about EGN strategic initiatives. The 7 elected seats of the 14 members of the Advisory Committee, including the Coordinator and Vice-Coordinator were renewed. After short presentations the following candidates were unanimously approved. The retiring Coordinator, Kristin Ragnes was thanked and received a standing ovation from EGN CC members.



Elected members

Coordinator	Sophie Justice	Chablais UGGp, France
Vice-Coordinator	Charalampos Fassoulas	Psiloritis UGGp, Greece
Advisory Committee	Alessia Amorfini	Apuan Alps UGGp, Italy
	Chris Woodley-Stewart	North Pennines ANOB, UK
	Cristian Ciobanu	Hateg Country UGGp, Romania
	Thuridur Braun	Reykjanes UGGp, Iceland
Individual Member	Maria Elena Mateo Mederos	Lanzarote and Chijino Island UGGp, Spain

Non-Elected Members

Founding Members	Nickolas Zouros	Lesvos UGGp, Greece
	Andreas Schüller	Vulkaneifel UGGp Germany
	Guy Martini	GGN Individual Member
Editorial Member	Tony Ramsay	Fforest Fawr, UK
IUGS Representative	Asier Hilario	Basque Coast UGGp, Spain
UNESCO Representative	Kristof Vandenberghe	Director, Earth Sciences Section
IUCN Representative		

Autumn EGN CC Meeting 27th September 2022: Seisa Val Grande UGGp, Italy

Seisa Val Grande UGGp, Italy hosted the EGN delegates 46th Coordination Committee meeting. Welcomed by the hosts and the Italian forum, delegates were addressed by the EGN, GGN and UNESCO. The meeting continued with information from the EGN communication channels and forthcoming meetings with contributions from the different delegates leading these actions. During the plenary session the EGN CC delegates adopted the creation of a temporary “youth” working group. Its objective is to enable a platform for young people (18-24 years) to have their own voice in the network.

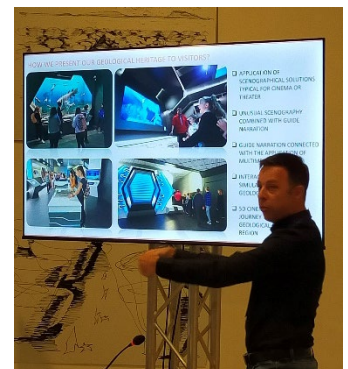
The EGN continues to build on its past success and is a fast-growing network. To ensure the wellbeing of the future network, a review of how the network operates is underway. During the EGN CC meeting all participants were split into smaller groups. Each group discussed and created a shared vision of a 5-year goal for how the EGN functions. Via the groups, all members of the EGN also made suggestions on the outputs needed to deliver this collective goal.



Working in groups, delegates discussed how to best align, participate, and contribute to the new GGN themed working groups. During these discussions delegates expressed a wish for a new climate change group. Some other EGN working groups were easily aligned with the GGN themes, such as communication.

16th European Geoparks Conference 28-30th September 2022: Seisa Val Grande UGGp, Italy

The biannual EGN conference is open to all those interested in European UNESCO Global Geoparks and wider UGGp activity. The network was delighted to meet in the Seisa Val Grande UGGp in Italy in an event that gathered more than 350 participants. Two days of high-quality parallel sessions and posters presented diverse topics including: Aspiring Geoparks, Geoheritage and Geodiversity, Geoscience: public engagement and education, Geoparks and the Ecological Transition. An enjoyable gala dinner preceded a day of field trips that explored different aspects of the area including the glacial heritage, heritage building stones, geotourism and local produce, geomorphology and cultural discoveries. An abstract book drawing together all the conference presentations is currently under production.



EGN Coordinators and Advisory Committee Activities

Since March 2022 the members of the EGN AC has met on a monthly basis to discuss and progress the matters relating to the European network. With the majority of these meetings taking place online, face to face meetings take place when possible. The coordinators have also taken part in GGN Executive Board meetings and supported Geoparks and National Fora in different events throughout the year.

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Since June 2022 monthly network news is shared with the EGN Coordination Committee via a newsletter. A GoogleDrive was created to host the network documents. All documents concerning the EGN are accessible to every AC member via the drive; CC members have access to documents via shared links.

EGN Communication

Social media

The EGN communications group has continued to be active, along with numerous European UNESCO Global Geoparks to create a lively Facebook, Twitter and Instagram feed for the regional network “European Geoparks Network”.



Newsletter

Jutta Weber, Bergstrasse-Odenwald UGGp, Germany and Daniella Rocha, Arouca UGGp, Portugal continue to support the network hugely with the regular production of the EGN Newsletter. UGGp's throughout Europe provided short articles and two issues were produced in 2022.

N° 21, December – May 2022 *“UNESCO Global Geoparks: Peace and understanding between the nations by networking, cooperation and partnership – examples from Europe.”*

N° 22, June – October 2022 *“Learning from the past, creating the present and serving for the future: How the UNESCO Global Geoparks in Europe integrate the Global Agenda 2030 into their holistic approach.”*

Newsletters can be accessed from the EGN website: https://www.europeangeoparks.org/?page_id=3807

Magazine

For many years Tony Ramsey, Fforest Fawr UGGp, UK has managed the contributions and editing for the EGN Magazine with the support of the Lesvos UGGp, Greece. European Geoparks are invited once a year to submit articles for publication.

In 2022 this continued with the publication of issues 18 and 19 of the magazine online. The 2022 magazine, entitled *“Progress in a time of crisis”* can be accessed via the EGN webpage

https://www.europeangeoparks.org/?page_id=395



EGN Week 23rd May – 5th June 2022

The special celebration of the EGN and the incredible European network takes place every year in late May. Following several years of improvisation and adaption as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, 2022

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saw the return of EGN week as a hands-on, experience-based discovery of the rich heritage of European UGGp's. Over 77 European Geoparks shared information and images of their activities which ranged from talks, tastings, sports, dancing, art, children. There were more than 130 000 participants in EGN activities during this celebratory week and more than 970 events programmed.

The network sincerely thanks the catalyst for this day, Barnabás Korbély, Bakony–Balaton UGGp, Hungary.



International Days

The Geoparks of the European network actively support many international days. These include the days listed below where the European Geoparks actively promoted and proposed events to celebrate these themes:

International Day of Mother Earth, 22nd April, catalyst Jutta Weber, Bergstrasse-Odenwald UGGp

International Day of Museums, 18th May, catalyst Cristian Ciobanu, Hateg Country UGGp

International Geodiversity Day, 6th October, catalyst Alicia Serna Barquero, Sierras Subbesticas UGGp

Disaster Risk Reduction, 22nd October, catalyst Alessia Amorfini, Apuan Alps UGGp

World Soil Day, 5th December, catalyst Sandra Teuber, Swabian Alb UGGp

Working Groups

EGN Working Groups met face to face in dedicated working time during the EGN CC meeting at De Hondsrug UGGp. In addition, several groups continued to meet regularly during the year in online sessions.

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Working groups continue to produce varied output, from idea exchange to new projects such as the publication of the “Geoparks in volcanic Areas in Europe”, an e-book produced by the EGN Volcanic Working Group for the general public. The book highlights volcanic heritage of European UGGp’s and seeks to promote sustainable geotourism. The book features articles from 19 Geoparks in Europe with volcanic geoheritage and can be accessed via the EGN website.



EGN and GGN Network Events

The EGN was represented at the online intensive course on UNESCO Global Geoparks organised by Lesvos UGGp. Sophie Justice, Chablais UGGp presented the EGN, its organisation and activities.

The Coordinator and Vice Coordinator of the EGN Kristin Ragnes then Sophie Justice and Babbis Fassoulas participated in the monthly GGN meetings to represent the regional network.

Other Events and Activities

Around Europe UGGp’s were active networking and sharing together. Some highlights where EGN participated 2022 include:

October 2022 Finnish National fora Discovery and development of the Finnish National Geopark Fora.

November 2022 China-Italy UNESCO Global Geoparks Meeting An online and offline meeting was organised by the China University of Geosciences, Beijing and the Italian Embassy for China to celebrate the Italy-China Cultural Tourism Year. There were more than 200 meeting participants including representatives of Adamello Brenta, Tuscan Mingin, Pollino and Madonie UNESCO Global Geoparks in Italy.

December 2022 EuroGEO Moving out of the COVID period in person meetings and events remained limited. However, the EGN participated in the annual EuroGEO meeting for Earth Scientists, EU Commission and research agency staff and other relevant parties. Sophie Justice presented European UGGp’s in the session on Geodiversity and Biodiversity. Participants were very interested in UGGp’s and their different roles and the network has been invited to continue to participate in the Ecosystem, biodiversity and geodiversity group.



EGN Promotional Fee

The EGN promotional fee for 2022 was €500. Payments were received for the 2022 financial year from 81 European UNESCO Global Geoparks.