

# Report on the Activities of the ISEE European Chapter

Period June 2022 – November 2022

Prepared by Hanna Boogaard and Petter Ljungman, co-chairs

## Organization

The European chapter, including elected and associated members, has continued its work with monthly conference calls and committee interactions.

We had a fresh round of elections to the ISEE Europe Executive Council in early fall and welcomed the newly elected ISEE Europe Council Member Carla Ancona from the Department of Epidemiology, Regione Lazio, Italy, as well as the re-elected Council Member Ana Vicedo Cabrera, University of Bern, Switzerland. Currently the Chapter consists of 7 elected members.

We would like to thank Philippa Douglas for her service as an associate member and Bénédicte Jacquemin, who rotates off as an elected member, but will stay involved as an associate member. We have also expanded our group of associated members to 22, and welcomed the following new associate members: Adjani Peralta, T.H. Chan School of Public Health, US; Alexandra Schneider, Helmholtz Zentrum, Munich, Germany; Annette Peters, Helmholtz Zentrum, Munich, Germany; Ebba Malmqvist, Lund University, Sweden and AirClim; Evan de Schrijver, University of Bern, Switzerland; Lorenzo Fabri, ISGlobal, Spain; Meltem Kutlar Joss, Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute and University of Basel, Switzerland; Mette Sørensen, Danish Cancer Society, Denmark; Rajini Nagrani, Leibniz Institute for Prevention Research & Epidemiology-BIPS, Bremen; Sierre Clark, UK Health Security Agency, United Kingdom.

ISEE Europe is looking back at a very successful ISEE conference in Athens. And what a joy it was to actually see and hug each other after such a long time! ISEE Europe organized a successful early morning session, together with the Health Effects Institute (see below). Furthermore, we held a productive and well-attended lunch meeting for all members from Europe and beyond to talk about the Chapter's current and future activities. Several suggestions were made, including continued engagement in [HERA](#)-like projects, to shape the environmental health research agenda in the EU. Furthermore, strategies to provide key input into the EU process revising the air quality directive for Europe were discussed and ways to raise the profile of research on health effects of noise, among others.

## Activities surrounding the revisions of the Air Quality Directive in Europe

The [proposal](#) for the revisions of the EU Ambient Air Quality Directive was released by the European Commission on October 26th, after years of intensive deliberations. For the next 18-24 months, the proposal will be the subject of negotiations between the Council and the Parliament and may undergo considerable changes during this process. In close collaboration with the ISEE Policy committee, ERS and many others, we continue to engage in this process.

While the proposal does not include a clear path towards alignment with the new WHO Air Quality Guidelines yet, it does present a number of important improvements including tighter limit values, average exposure reduction obligations, regular reviews of science, and access to information and justice.

A joint ISEE/ERS working group has been formed that invites everybody to take a close look at the proposal (or parts of it) and send comments on strengths and weaknesses of the proposal. The working group aims to develop a draft statement by mid December, before the ministers of the environment of the Member States will have their first discussion of the proposal on Dec 20th.

A key event will be a **high-level meeting in Brussels** with policymakers and stakeholders regarding the air quality guidelines and showcasing the latest data since the WHO review in demonstrating the health effects of low-level air pollution. We are in the early planning stage of such a meeting (currently looking to schedule in late Spring 2023), which would be of a similar structure as the very successful joint meeting we had in January 2020.

### **Continued work in Eastern Europe**

ISEE Europe organized a successful early morning session at ISEE 2022 in Athens, together with the Health Effects Institute. The session “Air Pollution and Health: The Case of Central and Southeast Europe” examined the status of current epidemiological evidence on the health effects of air pollution in Poland, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Greece and served to identify research gaps as well as opportunities for research and collaboration.

We continue our work to foster more research in environmental epidemiology in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe and are planning an in-person meeting in 2023. More information will be shared soon, and we are planning to advertise this event widely.

### **Climate Change and Health activities**

The ISEE European Chapter has a strong commitment to amplify and contribute to the climate change research community. Activities conducted this year include the completion of a series of 3 webinars on Climate Change and Health. The recordings of the webinars can be found [here](#).

We have worked closely with the Policy Committee on the following activities: application of COP observer status (awaiting response), ISEE membership to the Global Climate and Health Alliance ([GCHA](#)), and the coordination of our future presence at COP28. Some of our members contributed to the latest IPCC report.

### **Education and Communication**

We published our Autumn [newsletter](#) late November. The newsletter was sent to all ISEE Europe members to keep them abreast of the latest activities. We continuously revamp our [website](#) to keep it up to date with the latest information.