

Minutes of the EERA Council meeting

University of Hamburg
Tuesday 16th September 2003, 13:00-15:00

Present:

Michel Caillot, President
Margaret Kirkwood, Secretary General

Raymond Bourdoncle, Kyriaki Doulas, Ingrid Gogolin, Palmira Juceviciene, Elina Lahelma, Martin Lawn, Lejf Moos, Lesley Morrison.

Apologies:

Jose Esteve, Wim Jochems, Sverker Lindblad, Zoran Pavlovic, Stefan Wolter.

1 Welcome

The President opened the meeting by welcoming Council representatives to ECER. The Secretary General circulated a list of current and previous Council members so that it could be checked for accuracy. She explained that records had been lost when EERA's administration moved from Edinburgh to Glasgow. Palmira Juceviciene requested that her name be put back on the Council email circulation list. It was noted that there is no current representative for the Portuguese Association and, although one of the Spanish Associations (AIDIPE) has paid its membership fees, it is not represented on Council either. It was agreed that Michel should write to both Associations and ask them to nominate a Council representative.

2 Confirmation of Minutes of 17th & 18th May 2003 Council Meeting

- 4 (ii) – Ingrid confirmed that the Press Conference during ECER would take place on Wednesday 17th, 13:00-13:30 in Room 221 (ESA West building).
- 4 (iii) - Angelos Agalianos is from the European Commission, DG Research, Research in the Social Sciences and Humanities.
- 4 (v) – Margaret confirmed that the criteria for symposia submissions would be discussed at the joint Council/Convenor meeting.
- 4 (ix) – it was agreed that Universitas 21 did not offer to give a presentation at ECER but that EERA was supposed to officially invite them to do so.

Rest of Minutes approved

3 Matters arising from Minutes of 17th & 18th May 2003

- 4 (iii) – It was agreed that the Convenor invited to speak at the Closing Ceremony should be whoever the Convenors elect to represent them on Council. Kyriaki agreed to Michel's request to ask a post-graduate student to also speak at the Closing Ceremony.

- 4 (iii) - It was noted that a problem had occurred in the Pre-Conference organisation because of the late cancellation of Jo Frankham and Ian Stronach who had been scheduled throughout the programme to provide feedback to the presenters. Although replacements were found, this had caused extra work and last-minute difficulties for Kyriaki. It was agreed that this was disappointing and very inconvenient for the Pre-Conference organisers.
- 4 (iv) – following the late cancellation by Guy Neave, the second Keynote will now be given by Professor Jules Pieters, University of Twente. Council thanked Jules for standing in at such short notice. It was agreed that one Council member should be nominated to take responsibility for inviting Keynotes and communicating with them about arrangements for the conference. Ingrid volunteered to do this. Margaret proposed that after the conference she discuss by e-mail with Ingrid and Michel creating a set of procedures for securing all future Keynotes.
- 6 (iii) – Margaret confirmed that delegates had been emailed prior to the conference and reminded to avoid the use of jargon and to speak clearly during their presentation. The Chairperson Session Returns forms should also highlight any language problems.
- 7 (i) – Margaret explained that although approximately 800 delegates had registered for the conference, there had been 40 cancellations the week before. There were also around 200 delegates who had neither registered nor informed the office that they would not attend. Only when the office contacted them, did it become clear that the majority of these delegates had no intention of attending. As well as causing extra administration, this also means that many papers scheduled in the programme will now not be presented and there will be gaps in the sessions where presenters fail to turn up. As this has a considerable effect on the Networks and their individual programmes, Margaret agreed to discuss this problem with the Convenors. Martin suggested asking delegates to pay a deposit for their registration but Margaret highlighted that this would just cause an additional administrative burden. To try and solve this problem, it was agreed that the deadline for registration should be brought forward by 4 weeks to the end of July. Margaret proposed setting up a working group who would look at the issue via e-mail with her and Lesley. She will also invite a Convenor representative and Lejf Moos volunteered to represent Council.

4 President Elect appointment (MC)

Michel explained that this question had not been resolved at the end of the May meeting. He also pointed out that, because Jules Pieters' term as Dutch representative ends in December 2003, a new Treasurer must be elected to stand for the next 3 years.

Although Raymond Bourdoncle had proposed Martin Lawn as President Elect at the end of the May meeting, Martin had declined. Michel proposed that if Council agreed, Ingrid could act as President Elect and his term could be extended until ECER 2004 when he would hand over to Ingrid at the AGA. This proposal was unanimously accepted. Ingrid was pleased to accept and explained that she also had the support of the German Association in this decision. It was agreed that next year a new President Elect must be nominated so that the same situation does not arise.

5 ECER 2003 Hamburg practical arrangements (MK, IG)

5.i *Thank you to the local organisers*

Margaret thanked Ingrid Gogolin, Ingrid Lohmann and Christine Mayer - the 3 academics who oversaw the local organisation, and Dunja Meyer, the University administrator. She also thanked the student helpers for their assistance throughout the conference.

5.ii *Recent additions/amendments to the programme*

Margaret will Chair the opening Keynote by Sally Brown as well as the roundtable in the Policy network to discuss the issues raised in her Keynote. Jules Pieters will replace Guy Neave as the second Keynote and Michel will chair this session. Ingrid will chair the third Keynote. It was agreed that during the Opening Ceremony Michel should highlight the main events such as the UNESCO roundtable and the presentation by Angelos Agalianos.

Ingrid thanked Lesley for the compilation and production of the programme. It was agreed that this year's A4 programme was easier to read and much better than the previous A5 versions. Margaret explained that, due to problems with the database layout of the automatically generated programme, it had only been possible to produce the booklet in A4 format this year. It was agreed that all future programmes should be printed in this size.

5.iii *Secretary General's recent communication with the Convenors [previously circulated by e-mail] (MK)*

Margaret will distribute papers at the Convenor meeting (15:30-17:30), which will include advice on Chairing and completing session evaluations and how to manage gaps in the programme.

5.iv *Chairing of Keynotes and sessions and findings from the Lisbon reports by Chairpersons [previously circulated by e-mail] (MK)*

Margaret explained that Chairpersons must be encouraged to complete their evaluation forms because there was only a 59% response from Lisbon. Last year's returns indicated a successful and well-organised conference. It was agreed that the evaluation forms also provide important information on the quality of presentations and any language problems within sessions. Margaret requested that Council look at the Open Network programme to see if they are free to chair any sessions. Volunteers should inform her at the joint Council/Convenor meeting.

5.v *Equipment in rooms*

Ingrid explained that equipment cannot be guaranteed if delegates have not requested it on their original proposal submission form. Each room will have overhead projectors and flipcharts. Any technical problems should be reported to the student helpers who will be available in each building and will be identified by blue badges.

6 EERA Association and Institute Members: revised fee structure (MC, MK)

Michel explained that a proposal would be made at the AGA to revise membership fees. The new fees would be based on the Association or Institute size as well as the current GDP per capita criteria. Although there would be no change in fees for large existing members, the new structure would be fairer and more attractive to smaller members such as SERA and the new Austrian Association. Margaret explained that although this proposal will not please everyone,

there is a need to make the pricing structure more transparent and easier to administer. Martin felt this was a good proposal. To ensure agreement is reached, the proposal must be discussed further at the AGA.

7 Planning for the joint Council/Convenor meeting: Items for the agenda [paper tabled] (MK)

Margaret asked Council to read the tabled paper and asked if there were any additional items for discussion at the joint Council/Convenor meeting. Martin asked to speak about the EERJ and the EC infrastructure at the meeting.

8 Planning for the AGA: Items for the agenda [draft tabled] (MK)

It was agreed that the main item for discussion at the AGA should be the revised membership fee structure.

Michel closed the meeting at 15:30.

Saturday 20th September 2003, 13:40-16:00

Present:

Michel Caillot, President
Margaret Kirkwood, Secretary General
Jules Pieters, Treasurer

Raymond Bourdoncle, Kyriaki Doumas, Ingrid Gogolin, Wim Jochems, Palmira Juceviciene, Edwin Keiner, Martin Lawn, Sverker Lindblad, Lejf Moos, Lesley Morrison, Zoran Pavlovic Stefan Wolter.

Apologies:

Jose Esteve, Elina Lahelma.

9 Welcome [MC]

The President began by welcoming Council to the closing Hamburg meeting. He was particularly pleased to note the presence of new members, as this would ensure Council is renewed for the future. Due to some late arrivals, items would be discussed in a different order from that shown in the original agenda.

10 Treasurer's Report [JP]

Jules commented briefly on his report, which had already been circulated at the AGA for discussion. At the end of July expenditure stood at £80,000 and this was projected to rise to £139, 725 by the end of the year. Ideally at the end of each year there should be £55,000 in the high interest account with which to start the next year. Next year's income and expenditure figures should match those for 2003, although income will depend on the number of delegates who come to Crete. However, it is expected that the Conference income should cover 2004 costs and leave a positive balance by the end of the year.

It was noted that the balance at the end of 2001 and 2002 was considerably lower than in previous years. Jules explained that this was because expenditure had risen. Wim Jochems noted that staffing and administrative costs remain stable while all other costs are dependent on the conference. There may therefore be a profit after one conference and a deficit after the next.

A discussion followed on how to improve EERA's financial situation. Holding a conference every two years was discussed. Edwin Keiner argued that this was not a viable option as the Convenors did not support this change. Lejf Moos questioned what impact asking the local organisers to manage most of the conference would have on EERA's finances. Ingrid argued that although Hamburg University could have taken over more of this year's organisation, this would merely have shifted the cost from the EERA office to the local office, and would probably have proved more expensive. Raymond stressed that it would be very difficult for the host organisers to take over the organisation of the programme and networks, as they would have no knowledge of how they function, whereas the EERA office offers continuity and stability. Ingrid felt that the solution of Hamburg - the EERA office co-operating with a 'professional' conference organisation within the university, was the best way to organise ECER. If this was not possible, she suggested that the possibility and cost of co-operation with a commercial organisation should be explored from case to case.

Margaret joined the meeting at this stage and sought reassurance that Council were not proposing a change to the current office structure. It was clarified that there was no question of splitting the office function but that the issue was about how to maximise EERA's income.

Stefan Wolter explained that for the Swiss Association's conference, delegate fees meet only 20-30% of the costs. The rest of the costs must be subsidised through sponsorship and support from external organisations. He asked whether this was a possibility for EERA. Ingrid explained that this would not have been possible for the Hamburg conference because local organisations had been unwilling to offer sponsorship. Margaret agreed that it had not been possible to get sponsorship for the Edinburgh conference either.

Ingrid thanked Jules for his report, as it was beneficial for Council to be kept informed of EERA's finances. Michel requested that Ingrid report on the final expenditure for Hamburg at the next meeting.

Jules asked for Council's agreement on creating an office bearer's budget to cover costs incurred by the President, Treasurer and Secretary General during their term of office. It was agreed that this should be introduced in the 2004 budget. Michel also proposed a personal budget to cover Margaret's costs for childcare for 2003 onwards. This was also approved. Margaret will provide an estimate of costs to Jules so that these can be reimbursed.

11 EERA Office [MK]

Margaret reported briefly on the office, as this had already been discussed at the AGA. The high quality of work and good level of teamwork and stability were acknowledged. All staff contracts are due for renewal before the end of the year. Lesley Morrison's secondment ends in November 2003. Margaret explained that this secondment had been on the lowest administrative level and that she now wanted to secure the job on the next administrative level because Lesley is in charge of secretarial staff and works unsupervised. Furthermore, the Secretary General will not always be located at Strathclyde so there would be minimum involvement from Margaret's successors. The process of promotion depends on the University however and they may not support a case for promotion. If this is the case, Margaret forewarned Council that Lesley might decide not to continue with EERA. Martin proposed that Council send a letter to the personnel department to support the case. Michel agreed to consult with Margaret about this.

A major step has been taken by the development of a new conference database, which is still ongoing. Although this started well, the initial developer left the company and since then the level of customer service has deteriorated considerably. After the conference, discussions will continue to ensure that all outstanding requirements are delivered and any problems resolved. Letters requesting payment of outstanding membership subscriptions for 2001 and/or 2002 have already been issued and by the end of December reminder letters will be sent together with a request for the 2003 fees. Although January would be the best time to request 2004 fees, it was agreed that this should be delayed until April. However, before the office can do this, the fee bands for 2004 must be decided. The office will also chase up outstanding registration fees for Hamburg and prepare the 2003 paperwork for audit. Preparations for Crete will then begin. Sverker noted significant improvements in the functioning of the office and thanked the Secretariat for their work.

12 AGA (point added) [MC]

Margaret explained that this point had been added because of the difficulties that occurred at the AGA. Michel explained that the AGA was a legal institution within EERA and at the first ECER it had been a formal meeting in which decisions on membership fees were taken. He stressed that it is very important for the functioning of EERA. It was agreed that there was a need for a more formal organisation of the AGA and that the Council must officially invite Association and Institute representatives to attend so that proposals can be properly discussed and agreed on.

Although this was an important issue requiring further discussion, it was agreed that time did not permit further debate. Ingrid proposed that a sub-group be set up to investigate how best to organise future AGAs. This idea was approved and the issue will be included on the next meeting's agenda.

13 EERJ and Website [ML, MK]

Martin explained that there are 7 editions online and the journal now has more than 600 subscribers and is available in 338 libraries. He stressed that there is a direct correlation between citation and downloading. In future, submissions will be blind reviewed. Wim welcomed this and felt it would help the Dutch Association to promote it. There are 2 ways of

subscribing – individuals can subscribe for free or libraries can make a subscription. Council thanked Martin for his work on the journal.

Margaret explained that a new website has been designed and that Council will be briefly consulted on its structure. As the *Educationline* website already host the online searchable conference programme, Margaret proposed moving the EERA website here also. This would give a better overview of the whole conference. This proposal was approved.

14 Council Procedures [MK]

Margaret proposed that Council functioning be improved by drawing up procedures for various tasks, such as appointing Office Bearers, selecting and inviting Keynotes, responding to requests to join from new members. For example, how far in advance should Office bearers be elected and should they be chosen by means of informal discussion or by a formal vote. It was agreed that criteria for selecting Keynotes must also be established and a Council member should be nominated to assess the nominations and communicate with elected Keynotes. Margaret suggested that she draft a set of procedures for discussion at the next meeting. This was agreed.

15 Review of ECER 2003

15.i Pre-Conference [KD, IG]

Kyriaki felt the Pre-Conference had been successful and was pleased by the increase in both the quantity and quality of presentations. She praised the valuable contribution provided by the senior researchers in terms of good mentoring and feedback. For 2004, the Pre-Conference goals will be three-fold: to increase connections with Greece; to develop the pool of mentors with the help of Paul Standish; and to help students with financial difficulties to attend.

Ingrid thanked the local organisers who had helped with the Pre-Conference planning. She was unhappy however at the late cancellation of the 2 Post-Graduate Convenors who had been scheduled throughout the programme. She proposed that EERA write to them and that replacement mentors be found. Michel agreed to write to BERA about this. Ingrid also suggested that EERA approach the EU for funding, which could be used to help some post-graduates attend. Council thanked Kyriaki for her work on the Pre-Conference.

15.ii Main Conference [MK, IG]

Ingrid praised the smooth work with the local organisers and the EERA Office. Margaret proposed that Council investigate how well the networks function. She highlighted that 2 network Convenors did not attend the conference and that no arrangements were made for replacements in their absence. She will investigate this and will discuss with Ingrid, Michel and Edwin whether these Convenors need to be replaced.

Sverker noted that some sessions did not work as well as others and questioned how to deal with the issue of quality. Edwin agreed that the level of variation in quality between networks needs to be examined. Martin commented that some networks are now stronger and tighter than ever before.

The problem of presenters who did not attend was discussed. It was agreed that the deadline for registration should be moved forward so that the office knows much earlier who has registered and paid. They will then be able to remove presenters who have failed to register by the deadline from the programme before it is printed. The office will compile a list of delegates who did not attend and who gave no warning that their paper would not be presented. This will be circulated to the Convenors.

Ingrid suggested the following changes to the programme:

- printing the booklet day by day and in session order rather than in network order
- keeping a session free each day for special events such as Roundtables instead of running these in parallel with network sessions
- not scheduling network sessions on Saturday and instead leaving this free for other events such as Convenor meetings

These suggestions will be discussed at the next meeting.

16 Date of next meeting, ECER 2004 and venues for subsequent ECERs

The next Council meeting will be held at the University of Crete. As a suitable date in December could not be found, the next meeting will take place on Saturday 10th & Sunday 11th January 2004. Margaret proposed an 11:30 start to allow Michel, Ingrid and herself to meet with the local organisers beforehand. Martin stressed that flights to Crete at this time of year will be expensive.

Michel has met academics at the University. There will be no charge for the use of University rooms and he has been assured that there will be no problem with hotel accommodation. The local organisers have requested the third week in September. The Pre-Conference will therefore take place on Monday 20th and Tuesday 21st September followed by the Main Conference on Wednesday 22nd – Saturday 25th. Ingrid and Martin stressed that these dates coincide with the first week of teaching at English Universities and this could result in a decrease in delegate numbers from England.

Margaret said that the Irish National Association had offered to host ECER 2005 in Dublin. This was agreed as a very attractive and easily accessible location. Geneva is a possible venue for 2006. A network Convenor has also suggested that Turin could be a future venue, although no specific date has been discussed. The University of Leuven in Belgium have offered to be a fallback venue for 2004 or 2006 if plans for the Crete or Swiss venues fall through.

17 AOCB

17.i EC Infrastructure bid [ML]

Martin explained that the infrastructure bid is one of the 3 main areas of the 6th framework. The bid will be based mainly on the success of the PERINE project. The idea is to pool national research conference papers and include them on a searchable open-access infrastructure. There is also the possibility of building in a translation service for abstracts. As well as facilitating collaboration between networks, this would also benefit smaller organisations by providing increased access to previously unavailable information resources.

As the deadline is 1st March, the bid must be written by January. Margaret asked if this would replace the bid for the Network of Excellence previously submitted by Jules. Martin confirmed that it would be a separate bid possibly entitled “Learning for Common Knowledge Production in Europe”.

17.ii EC Project for support for European Associations active in the field of education or training [MC]

Michel discussed the tabled EC paper, which outlined an action for support for European Associations active in the field of education or training. EERA fulfils the criteria for support as it has members in at least 12 member states, is composed of National Associations and has legal charitable status. This could therefore be a key way of raising income. Michel stressed that Council should consider the proposal and decide whether EERA should apply for support.

17.iii Competition for young educational researchers [IG]

Ingrid proposed that EERA should offer an award for excellence to young researchers, which would grant them free entry to ECER. This suggestion was approved.

Michel closed the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance.