

Minutes of the EERA Council Meeting
Gent, Belgium
Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th January and 2007

Present:

Ingrid Gogolin, President
Wim Jochems, Treasurer
Lisbeth Lundahl, Secretary General

Matthis Behrens, Paul Conway, Iñaki Dendaluze, Ian Grosvenor, Martin Lawn, Lejf Moos, Fran Payne, Michael Uljens.

Delegates from ECER local committees: Bram De Wewer, Martin Valcke (ECER 2007) and Björn Hasselgren (ECER 2008).

1 Apologies for absence and welcome to new members

Lesley Morrison, David Bridges, Bénédicte Gendron, Elena Zezlina-Phillips, Herbert Altrichter (Austrian Education Research Association), Zoran Pavlovic, Peter van Petergem (Flemish Educational Research Forum).

2 Confirmation of Minutes of 12th and 16th September 2006 Council Meeting

The minutes were approved.

3 Matters arising from Minutes of 12th and 16th September 2006 Council Meeting

Council agreed that a “news” button should be inserted on the website giving information about different activities in regards to encouraging national associations to join EERA.

Bénédicte Gendron has sent a report about her having encouraged the founding of a new association from Russia. She tried to contact the Portuguese Education Research Association but despite having good representation at the conference received no response. Iñaki Dendaluze agreed to try to reactivate the Portuguese association. Bénédicte has been in contact with a founding group in Gdansk, Poland.

4 ECER 2007 Ghent

I. Local Committee Report

Venues:

Martin Valcke and Bram De Wever reported that 25-30 rooms have been booked for the ECER events. However, at least 35 will be reserved, as another venue has been added to meet the demands of the EERA council. They have secured a historic site for the opening ceremony and social gatherings. Spaces for the Saturday meetings were guaranteed by the local committee.

The local committee supported by the EERA office will draft a roster of all the rooms, venues, available equipment and events, similar to the one in Geneva 2006.

Accommodation:

In the greater Ghent area 1.000-1.200 rooms are available and 550 have been blocked for ECER delegates. In addition 180 rooms will be blocked for the participants of the pre-conference. 20 rooms will be reserved for the council and keynote speakers.

Website:

The local committee will place information on accommodations on the website and urge delegates to book fast. Information on public transportation to and within the city, the region and surrounding cities and a link to the EERA website will be added as well.

Pre-conference:

The call for papers is out already but the review process has not started. The local committee contacts are Tammy Schellens and Hilde Van Keer. Ingrid reported that Paul Standish proposed to have longer workshop style session, including information on how to achieve the doctoral level. The local committee will contact Paul Standish on the issue.

Keynotes:

Martin Valcke reported that Robert Slavin has agreed to speak at the conference. Jan-Erik Gustavsson from Sweden and Richard Shavelson (Stanford University) from the USA are the candidates for the second keynote speaker. The local committee needs the names of all four speakers as soon as possible in order to secure funds from the national association. Martin Lawn remarked that potential and confirmed speakers must be informed that they are supposed to publish an article in EERJ. The sequence of speakers should be planned in order for them to respond to each other and Slavin.

Conference Materials:

Council confirmed that a conference book would be printed. Bram has already begun the coordination with the EERA office. In addition a conference folder or bag will be produced displaying the ECER, EERA and University of Ghent logo.

II. Programme Schedule

Council agreed to the President's suggestion to invite Dr. Ernst-Ludwig Winnacker, head of the European Research Council as keynote speaker and to

Lisbeth's suggested keynote speaker Dr. Jenny Ozga. Council Members voiced concerns about two American speakers as proposed by the Local Committee and wish Martin Valcke to invite a European speaker to counterbalance a possible one-sided perspective. The President urged council members to send her possible substitutes apart from the already named Stefan Hornborstel for the two named prospective speakers as soon as possible. She will send formal invitations to Winnacker, Ozga and substitutes and inform the local committee of its choice immediately.

Council agreed that there will be no formal opening in the morning but in the evening due to the availability of a more appropriate venue.

III. Review Process

The review process will take place as usual. Ian suggested that the open network should be closed due to major problems with quality of contributions and presence of listeners or chair persons. Unfitting papers will still be sent to Ian, however only if the network convenors clearly indicate the reasons for rejection.

IV. Pre-conference

The President reported that Paul Standish tried to contact Elena Zezlina-Phillips but she has been ill. Joana Duarte from the University of Hamburg is willing to take over the responsibilities for the PGN from Elena, if she agrees, with the support of Paul Standish. They need help finding reviewers.

5 Location of EERA Office

The President designated Lisbeth as chair for this item of the agenda. Fran Payne left the room for the discussion because of personal involvement as former SERA President.

Lisbeth explained that as agreed in Geneva GERA and SERA made adjustments to their bids for housing the EERA office. Based on the following four criteria the two bids were compared and evaluated by the Office Committee:

- all costs, including housing and staff costs of 2 full time equivalent p.a
- relevant past performance with respect to the organization of conferences, to providing support to review procedures, to summer schools, to communication of the association and to other relevant activities;
- commitment of the national educational research association;
- flexibility with respect to the availability of staff (e.g. more temporarily staff in busier periods; less in more quiet parts of the year; use of student workers for routine activities, etc.).

Despite the difficulties of comparing the two offers the report concluded:

- Both national organisations express commitment and will to support the EERA office in the future. There is a need of detailing conditions of employment and management in both cases.
- In regards to experience the Glasgow office has a strong advantage in its long-time, successful administration of the ECERs and a solid experience in this field. The GERA office has come farther than the Glasgow office in developing a user-friendly website, and has started to investigate various conference softwares. In both cases there is a need of competence development but of different kinds.
- As regards long term costs and potential flexibility, Berlin seems the preferred option

Based on the results of the evaluation, the committee put forth a three-step proposal to Council:

- transfer of the EERA office to Berlin.
- ask the Treasurer and Secretary General to detail the route from Glasgow to Berlin, taking into consideration the termination of the Glasgow contracts at the end of 2007 and the costs involved, and to report about the progress in the next council meetings.
- negotiate a contract between EERA and the German Education Research Education, detailing the relation between the two organisations in regards to the office, including line management and employer responsibilities. The Secretary general and the Treasurer should be asked to formulate such a contract.

Council unanimously agreed to all three proposals. Martin Lawn proposed to form a subgroup within Council for three years as a basis to monitor the progress of the office against the aims and objectives set by Council for the office. The proposal was accepted.

The President will inform Lesley Morrison and Jana Dreyer about the Council's decision. Wim will talk to the responsible administrators at Strathclyde University in Glasgow and inform them about the decision, in order to secure a smooth transition to Berlin. He also agreed to draft a formal, dynamic four-year contract with Berlin and GERA for office responsibilities.

Council thanked the committee for the efficiently and well carried out assignment.

6 EERA Constitution

Fran Payne reported that due to the possible move of the office from Glasgow to Berlin she had not made any further alterations to the constitution. Council decided that once the issue is solved Fran will change phrasing of "Executive

Committee” to “Council”, delete the “no more than 16 members” and the “SERA” clause, add a “seat by right for every member association” clause, a minimum member requirement for every member association and install an “in good standing” clause to clarify that only associations and not institutes, which paid their dues may be represented on council. Instead of deleting the status of co-opted council members it must be updated in regards to the length of representation on the council to three years. The council agreed that the EERJ editor, the network convenor and Post Graduate Network convenor, should be co-opted to council. Council decided that a four-year period for “candidate countries”, which will not have to pay dues and instead will receive assistance, should be implemented. Fran will produce an amended version of the constitution for next meeting.

7 Treasurer’s report on financial situation

The Treasurer reported that at the end of 2005 there was a positive result of €150,926, which was the consequence of the large number of delegates in Dublin and the financial model which relates the money made available for ECER to the number of paying delegates. The estimated balance at the end of 2006 was €170,926. There will be no increase in either membership or ECER fees for 2007. Banking costs will be reduced by the introduction of online payment procedures. Council approved the Treasurer’s report. The 2006 budget balance will finance the estimated cost of 40.000 Euro for the move of the office from Glasgow to Berlin.

The Treasurer proposed to increase the ECER 2007 budget by 8.000 Euros in order to provide simple lunches to the delegates. The council agreed and the Treasurer will adjust the budget accordingly.

A high interest account was opened in Euro, which offers a higher interest rate than Sterling by the Treasurer. EERA had an income in 2006 of which parts must be returned to the publisher of EERJ. The Treasurer will meet with the publisher to solve this issue.

Both the SEP and LERA have not paid their annual dues for the last two years. Instead of removing them from the association both will be given an ultimatum to pay before they will be removed. Iñaki will contact the SEP and the President will inform LERA. Council agreed to subsidize Portugal if necessary in order to keep them as member association. The President and Secretary will produce a brochure stating obligations of, services and benefits for current and prospective members.

8 Website

See items 3 and 4.

9 EERJ Report

The EERJ Editor reported that in 2006 nearly 50.000 articles were downloaded from the EERJ site marking a steadily rising curve of use. About 3.300 ECER and former ECER participants from 86 countries receive the newsletter informing them of the content of the new EERJ. Of the paid subscriptions the largest groups come from the UK, Sweden and Ireland. The next major cluster is Lithuania, Finland and Germany, followed by a considerable number from Australia, Denmark, Netherlands, Portugal and Spain. The Roundtable at Ghent will focus on the “Future of the Knowledge Economy” and will be based upon significant input about China and its research investment.

10 Report from networks

Ian stated that there was a need to generate a description of roles and responsibilities for the networks’ convenors and agreed to draft some text for the Gent Convenor's meeting.

In his report he also drew attention to a gap between the aspirations of the Council as articulated in a previous document regarding the future of EERA and the reality reflected in the Network reports. He encouraged Council to actively disseminate its ideas about the future.

With regards to the Network reports he noted that as of the Gent Council Meeting only 11 had been received. These reports were of varying length and coverage, which he detailed. It was recommended to Council that:

- the Secretary General write to those Networks, which have not posted a report and remind them of the Council ruling regarding non-submission;
- Ian Grosvenor produce a basic report template for the web to be tabled at the Gent Convenor's meeting.

11 EERA Office Report

The President gave a brief report based on a report written by the Office Manager.

12 ECER 2008

Local committee coordinator Björn Hasselgren presented the current status of preparations for ECER 2008. He is part of a formally constituted leading troika including chair, Secretary and coordinator that is in charge of

organizing the conference. The issue of funding in regards to a 25% fee on all wire transfers to Sweden was raised and the Treasurer urged the local committee to make a complete overview of the costs, which is to be sent to the Treasurer. Wim encouraged the local committee to find additional sponsors.

Council emphatically agreed to the proposed conference theme of “From Teaching to Learning?”

The local committee proposed an opening party for the delegates in a rented bar or public square, which the council supported but insisted that participation be optional.

They have started to work on the conference website, which will be designed and structured similar to the Geneva 2006 site. Both the EERA and the Ghent 2007 websites will announce the ECER 2008 from now on.

All agreed on scheduling the next meeting in Gothenburg for Sat. 12th and Sun. 13th of January, 2008.

13 Plan for investigating and introducing conference software

This item was not discussed as it is closely linked to the Berlin move.

14 Communications

I. ECER 2008

II. Summer School 2007

The President reported that the German Education Research Association once again (DGfE) is preparing a summer school. The council agreed to the proposed dates, location and time slots. Hans van der Meye will be invited as lecturer and workshop host, as will be Chris Taylor from Cardiff to fill the international hour slot. Paul Conway and Lejf Moos agreed to join up for a task force to develop the Summer School idea in the future in regards to a greater European orientation and integration.

III. Proposal for a EEQI

The President gave an update on EEQI developments. She will attend an EU conference in Brussels on Jan. 22nd on collaborative approaches in the 7th framework. Diann Pelz-Rusch will attend a conference at which the topic will be addressed in the German context. There will be another EEQI meeting in Hamburg in 2007, however, as of now the date has not been set. Matthis Beherens asked to receive a short summary of the project and an overview of the costs in order to solicit funds and receive support from the national association.

15 Venue of next meeting

The council decided to change the location of the next meeting on June 16th and 17th from Düsseldorf to Berlin. Jana Dreyer will be responsible for organizing the meeting.

16 Miscellaneous:

The President reported that Francesca Gobbo has expressed interest in possibly hosting ECER 2009 in Italy, as a national association is currently being constituted. Ingrid and Michael Uljens will form a task force to find a venue for 2009. Both Italy and Vienna will be examined.

Council thanked Fran Payne for the tremendous work and time she put into EERA and officially bids her farewell from the council.