**Meeting Executive Committee EASSW**

**Tallinn University, Estonia. November, 23-26 2011**

***Present*:** Sue Lawrence, Annamaria Campanini, Peter Hendriks, Gunter Friesenhahn, Anke Beuck, Violeta Gevorgianienė, Ewa Kantowicz, Maria-Asunción Martínez-Román, Marju Medar, Nino Žganec and Ronny Heikki Tikkanen

***Apologies***: Alessandro Sicora, Vasilios Ioakimidis, Adéla Mojžíšová, Jérôme Wenz and Sanela Basic.

**1. Minutes of Brussels EC-meeting, April 2011**

Minutes were accepted after minor corrections:

**2. Update on activities since Brussels report**

Discussion whether the minutes should include reports from social work issues in the EC members’ countries. This is not fully possible since the EC members are not representing their countries. Moreover, there are several countries not represented in EC. Regional seminars should in the future be reported on our new website.

***President’s report:***

*Report from IASSW board meeting in Nairobi:*

15 persons in total attended the meetingincluding Sue Lawrence from EASSW.

Topics discussed at the meeting:

* The importance to hold meetings where capacity building of Social Work (Education) is important. This is something that EASSW might consider;
* International Definition of Social Work -the work continues and Vishantie Sewpal from South Africa is preparing a draft based on regional comments. This will be considered at the next IASSW meeting in Indonesia in January 2012;
* World Social Work Day 2012 - 20 March 2012 – All countries should attempt to hand the Global Agenda to governments and regional and international governmental bodies.
* UN Social Work Day will be held 26th of March. The latest version of the Global Agenda of Social work and Social Development will be officially submitted to the United Nations Secretary General:
* We should disseminate information about these days in our networks.

*IASSW Stockholm conference 8-12 July 2012*: There will be an extended deadline for abstract submission (January 2, 2012). Participant registration opens 1 December 2011.

ENSACT-meeting in Istanbul April 2013: There will be a certain room reserved for each organization for workshops arranged by the specific organization on one day of the conference.

***Secretary’s report***

*The new EASSW website*: will be launched in end of December. *Invoices* for membership 2012 will be sent out in January.

Günther will join the programme committee of ENSACT.

There will be a regional conference in Posnan, Poland Autumn 2012. Focus: Women in Social Work.

Some written member reports were missing and will be sent to Peter.

**3. Organizational structure of EC**

We need to share the task and responsibilities. After a discussion the following were proposed:

* *Anke, Annamaria* and *Nino* will support the President and vice President.
* *Nino*: will support Marju in the budget supporting group.
* *Alessandro*: will work on the newsletter.
* *Vasilios;* offered already sometime ago to work on the website, Peter to check if he still wants to engage in website activities
* Violeta: will support Peter regarding communication of the importance of membership and will support Marju in the budget supporting group
* *Jerome*: translation of the EASSW webpage into French
* Ronny: will support Peter regarding communication of the importance of membership with the webpage and Social Media.
* Ewa: Project Panel and budget group.
* Maria-Asunción offered to do the translations into Spanish
* Adéla – Peter to contact regarding areas of interest
* Sanela: Peter to contact regarding areas of interest

**4. Membership fees**

The EC can decide the level for membership fees. There was discussion about group membership fees: What constitutes a group when it comes to group membership fees? Do we accept new group memberships? SL and MM will approach representatives from Israel at the IASSW meeting in Jakarta and discuss the membership of Israel in EASSW. Should they belong to another regional organisation?

**5. Relationships with other social organizations and responses to initiatives, innovations.**

Günter Friesenhahn suggested that it is important to consider the ways to strengthen the relationships with Council of Europe, various social organizations, for instance, NGOs, which sometimes do social work without understanding what it is. NGOs are looking for stronger partners who would be able to distribute their ideas. In the process of Global Agenda and redefinition of social work it’s important to have in mind different European associations that do not have the same ethic. For this task structures that already exist, for instance, ENSACT, whose mission is a joint social action (not only organization of conferences), may be used. One of the tasks of joint action could be presenting the Global Agenda which opens up a lot of topics for inclusion of other social professions. That may lead to other forms of action. It is important to have a voice in the European Commission, Council of Europe, and UN Office in Geneva.

*Identity of social work in the frame of relationships with social organizations.* There is often an ambiguity of professional identity of those working in the social work field. Social work students often do not have strong social work identity. In many countries professional identities of related professionals are not related to social work. In Poland, for instance, there is an overlap of identities of a social worker and a social pedagogue. Many associations in Netherlands don’t want to link with social work, because it has old-fashioned image. In Croatia attempts to regulate work places of social workers are made. In China and the rest of the world the question of identity is even hotter.

It is important not to create a rigid social work identity, otherwise future partners may be lost. The possible strategy might be to welcome others to take our ethics and mission statement. In the ENSACT conference SW identity should be discussed and the EASSW special day for SW educators during ENSACT conference could take the topic of SW identity, they could identify.

*Definition of SW.* Identity of social work profession is very much related to Definition of social work: when it will be formulated, the identity will be more precise, taking into account that this definition is bound to change in the process of society change. The challenge is to manage suggestions for the definition and to maintain the core of it. The new definition should be ready for the next IASSW meeting in Jakarta. During the next ENSACT conference a seminar, workshop or symposium for SW Definition could be organized.

***Decision/action:***

* *To use the ENSACT conference for presenting the Global Agenda to social professionals;*
* *To organise a special EASSW day for SW educators during ENSACT conference (workshops, symposium, etc.);*
* *To have a seminar for SW Definition during ENSACT conference.*

**6. Proposal EASSW Secretariat.**

The biggest part of the new President’s and officers’ initial work has been transferring of the EASSW Secretariat. The work of the Secretary in this transition time took at least 2 days per week, but on voluntary basis it is not possible when one has a full time job. The huge administrative load for officers might also prevent others for applying for officers positions. It is important to have a permanent (and paid) independent Secretariat for ongoing technical tasks in order to become a professional organization. There are many advantages as the Secretariat can continue to operate when officers change. However the contracts with private sector should be avoided. A University which will have a moral obligation for the work should be considered; not necessarily located in Netherlands.

**Decision/action*:*** *EC members will think how to set up permanent (paid) Secretariat and will look for a University that would host it.**In the meantime the Secretariat will be kept until summer 2012 in Utrecht.*

**7. Newsletter for the members of EASSW.**

A Skype session with Alessandro Sicora (Italy) took place. He presented a draft of a newsletter, based on his experience with the Italian national association. In January on the EASSW web, the newsletter and invoices for membership will be launched. All members should get Newsletter and invoices, but it would also be meaningful to send newsletters to non-members.

**Decision/action**:

*All EC members will send articles to Alessandro in December*

*Alessandro will then send a draft newsletter to the Committee members and in January the final version will be ready.*

*After that a newsletter will be sent to the Committee members and they will pass it to schools (in each country);*

*EC members who cannot attend meetings may consider skype as a way of participating in future*

**8. PR, flyers and banners for conferences and meetings.**

EASSW organization needs to be more visible. Banners with the logo, which should be easily transportable, flyers (also translated), etc. are needed. It would be reasonable to have a stand with EASSW materials and information in Stockholm conference.

It was discussed if the EC members need business cards, as far as most of the work is going in internet. However business cards may be important for representing EASSW in official meetings. They could be also available in PDF file.

**Decision/action:**

*To look for the possibilities to design a poster: Sue Lawrence will look for it in UK, Peter Hendriks – in Netherlands;*

*Peter will send an e-mail to members concerning private addresses and business cards.*

**9. Finances.**

On the 10th of October EC secretariat received the transfer of money to its new bank account, most of the outstanding bills are paid, for the end of the year there is approximately 110.000 euro. The entire deficit from Brussels conference was paid and 17,342.95 Euros was shared between the 7 ENSACT members.

It was agreed open a separate budget heading for European-China forum.

The choice of the web designer “Rainman” has successful and his quote was comparatively very reasonable – keeping down costs.

Concerning travelling of the officers to official meetings the President suggested that only travel and accommodation should be covered (not the meals). Other members did not agree because personal situations may be different. It has been agreed to limit expenses for meals to 25 Euros per day.

Reasons for raising membership fees were discussed. The financial situation in most countries’ social work organizations is becoming more difficult. Proposal (by Sue Lawrence) was not to raise the fees for 2012 and to review the situation after a year. This will also allow raising this question on General Assembly.

**Decision/action:**

*To fully cover from the budget travel and accommodation expenses of the officers who are going to official meetings and to limit their subsistence cost to 25 Euros per day;*

*To create a separate column in the budget for European-China forum;*

*Any future funding concerning the European-China forum,should be applied for as an innovative project.*

*To set aside an amount for PR on the budget for 2012.*

*Not to raise the membership fees for 2012 and to review the situation after a year;*

*To raise the question of increasing fees on the General Assembly in Istanbul in 2013.*

**10. Bulletin for EC members.**

A problem arose that due to different reasons not all EC members received by e-mail all necessary information.

**Decision/action:**

*To collect twice a year all info for EC members and summarise it in a bulletin between EC meetings (July and January).*

**11. Europe-China Forum.**

The current situation with the dialog was described by Annamaria Campanini. Participation in this process takes an enormous amount of time. The philosophy – to keep a dialogical seminar with restricted number of people – is to be maintained. The objective is to establish dialogue and to make possible common projects. Informal dialogues till now seem more valuable. It is important while planning the meetings/seminars to fix the dates in time to make it possible for EASSW to be represented.

In terms of the content there are new topics suggested for the future (see Annamaria’s report). The challenge is how progress from here, how to create a group of people which could be more stable. It would be good to think about the possibility to publish a book with the collection of all presentations. Angie Yuen after finishing her Presidency of IASSW plans to be more involved into the work of the Forum. One of the next opportunities could be organization of Europe-China workshop inside the Stockholm conference.

The dissemination of “Europe-China” Forum results was discussed. EASSW (EC) has to be more specific in the type of knowledge that has to be transferred. It could focus on building the structure of the welfare state, qualifications, education, etc.

There is a project concerning China inside IASSW. The possibility to combine efforts should be considered if it is of benefit. The ne Association connected with Forum was created in order to make funding and dialogue with China easier, and Annamaria Campanini was asked to be one of the founders of association.

The experience of some Danish universities shows that in order to get benefit from the cooperation it is important to have a person (Chinese) employed for a very long time who would work for the aims of organization.

**Decision/action**:

*The production of presentations, lectures, etc., related to Forum, should be web-based – they are to be collected beforel April;*

*Strategies on how to proceed (also to consult with the last group which participated in Dialogue) have to be developed;*

*Organization of a workshop in Stockholm in the frame of the Dialogue could be a next important step;*

*To make clear Chinese colleagues about the objectives of cooperation; to put the 1st China meeting report on the web.*

**12. IASSW**

In addition to the report from the President (see point 4):

Upcoming IASSW meeting 28. – 30. January 2012: Susan Lawrence will attend, but Günter Friesenhahn is not able to attend. Marju Medar will go in his place if substituting is acceptable. The agenda will include

* The Global Agenda
* The International Definition of Social Work
* Restructuring IASSW
* The Stockholm Conference.

**13. ENSACT Conference Brussels 2011 and Istanbul 2013**

The deficit from the Brussels Conference was smaller than first estimated. FICE has chosen to opt out of the next ENSACT conference. Nol Reverda will step down as ENSACT President after the Istanbul Conference and the ENSACT construction should be evaluated by then.

The EC discussed the written feedback from the participants. There was positive feedback on the content, but much critisism of the practical organisation of the

conference. The EC discussed how the original intentions behind the programme structure were only successful in part. Particularly the attendance of registered participants at field workshops in various social work agencies was not very successful.

The EC also stressed the need for EASSW members to be able to identify and focus upon social work education subjects and members at some point during the joint conference.

These experiences will be kept in mind when arranging the Istanbul Conference. Having the conference in one setting with professional conference facilities will hopefully solve the practical and logistic problems experienced in Brussels.

The need to focus upon educational developments will be met by arranging a day (on the 18. April), when each member organisation will have separate facilities, a discrete day for each partner association of ENSACT.

Günter Friesenhahn offered to make a draft proposal for the programme of the discrete EASSW day and he will also support Peter Hendriks on the Programme Committee.

The Istanbul ENSACT Conference will be held on the 17. – 19. April 2013. The overall title is "Social Action in Europe: Towards Inclusive Policies and Practices".

**14. Project Applications**

The Project Group had received 4 applications since the last EC meeting. 2 projects were accepted by the EC and will receive grants, provided that all partners are members of EASSW.

The Project Group will

* Add a new criterion to the regulations: Applying schools must have been EASSW members at least one year prior to applying for project funds.
* Draft an outline for the final report.
* Update the EASSW website accordingly.

**14. EC Members Officially Representing a National Association**

Dutch SW educations are in the process of forming a national Association as have many other European countries. The EC will welcome any member from a European country as long as the EC member is elected by the EASSW General Assembly.

**15. European Framework for Life Long Learning (2008)**

Günter Friesenhahn expressed concern that the framework may have implications for social work educations in terms of categorisation of academic levels. Examples from Estonia, England and Germany revealed that SW Bachelors may be placed at different levels when the national bodies categorise the bachelor levels.

It was decided that this is a general bachelor issue that should be dealt with generally at national levels and across the European countries.

**16. Travel Subsidies from the EC Solidarity Fund**

The EC decided to continue with budgeting a total of € 1000 annually for grants of max. € 250 per journey.

**17. Next EC Meeting**

If the conference in Presov, Slovakia, is confirmed, the dates will be as follows for April 2012:

25.42012.: Arrival in the evening (no meeting)

26.4.2012: Conference participation

27.4.2012: Full work day

28.4.2012: Full work day

29.4.2012: Departure day

If the conference in Presov will not take place, the EC will meet in Koblenz:

25.4.2012: Arrival in the evening (no meeting)

26.4.2012: Full work day

27.4.:2012 Full work day

28.4.2012: Departure day

For the October/November meeting 2012 Poznań and Lisbon have been proposed.

Thanks to minute takers: Ronny Heikki Tikkanen, Violeta Gevorgianienė and Anke Beuck.

Thanks to Marju Medar and colleagues at Tallinn University for their hospitality and organisation.