

Minutes of the EERA Council meeting

**Committee Room, Collins Building, University of Strathclyde
Saturday 17th & Sunday 18th May 2003**

Present:

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

Raymond Bourdoncle, Kyriaki Doumas, Ingrid Gogolin, Martin Lawn, Lejf Moos, Lesley Morrison, Zoran Pavlovic.

Apologies:

Jose Esteve, Elina Lahelma, Jorge de Lima, Sverker Lindblad, Ian Stronach, Stefan Wolter.

1 Welcome and apologies for absence

The President opened the meeting by welcoming Lejf Moos to Council as the new Nordic representative, replacing Kirsten Hofgaard-Lycke. The apologies were read and it was noted that Stefan Wolter replaces Bernard Schneuwly as the Swiss representative.

2 (and 3) Confirmation of Minutes of 14th & 15th December 2002 Council Meeting and matters arising

2.i Minutes of Saturday 14th December

- Correction of spelling of Margaret Kirkwood's name.
- 4 (ii) – Margaret Kirkwood reported that feedback from sessions has been sent to the Convenors. Although there was not a 100% return from Chairs, it provided a general overview on sessions. It was agreed that this process should be repeated at Hamburg. Council requested that Margaret send them a short written report on the session feedback.
- 5 (iv) – As the keynotes for this year have already been arranged, it was agreed that the procedure of recording information on keynotes would begin after Hamburg.

Rest of Minutes approved

2.ii Minutes of Sunday 15th December

- The first item should be point 5 “Hamburg conference: second part.” The second keynote has now been decided as Neave.
- The second item should be point 6, which should be entitled “ECER 2005 and contact with other associations”.
- 9 (i) – the conference fees for non-members should be £220/240 for high GDP (payments before/after June 15), £110/120 for both low GDP, and full time post-graduates from high GDP, £55/60 for full time post-graduates from low GDP. Margaret explained she did not approve the decision taken at the December Council meeting to reduce the GDP limit to \$15000 because she felt it was too late. A reduction in the limit at that stage would mean

that many of the Lisbon delegates who had benefited from a low GDP in 2002 (from Spain, Portugal, Greece) would no longer qualify for the reduced fee but would assume they would as this had been the case the previous year. They would therefore pay the incorrect amount and the office would have the reverse of the problem they had for Lisbon (refunding GDP delegates who had paid too much) this time they would have extra work chasing up delegates no longer classed as low GDP for extra fees. It was agreed that any changes in fee levels should be clearly advertised and explained to delegates. Margaret will include this point on the AGA agenda so that a decision can be made in time for setting the 2004 fees.

- 11(iii) – Stefan Wolter replaces Lucien Criblez as the Swiss representative.
- 11(iv) – the Convenor representative will be elected when they meet in Hamburg and will attend the second Council meeting at ECER.

Rest of Minutes approved.

4 ECER 2003 Hamburg

4.i Progress of the Local Organising Committee (IG)

The official conference contract has now been signed and Ingrid gave it to Lesley Morrison for the office archives. Despite renovations in one of the campus buildings, Ingrid explained that there would still be sufficient rooms, with a maximum of just 5 minutes walk between them. Twenty rooms have been booked, but access to 30 is possible if the need arises. The delegate badge will entitle people to local transport for the duration of the conference. Some student helpers have already been hired and data projectors are being rented. As delegates had not been charged extra for equipment, the cost of hiring it had to be built into the contract. Margaret explained that delegates were not charged for equipment because problems of who should pay would arise in the case of symposia or joint papers. The office will send a report on the equipment required by each network to the local organisers who will allocate sufficient equipment to the relevant rooms.

Ingrid asked for advice on the type of music that should be chosen for the opening ceremony. It was agreed that the musical interlude should be short and a small orchestra was preferred. Ingrid requested that at the opening ceremony Michel makes a floral presentation to thank Dunja Meyer for her work on the conference. Although the President, Dean of Faculty and President of DgfE would participate in the opening ceremony, they would not attend the closing event. It was decided that the closing ceremony should be just an internal EERA event.

Following an invitation from Michel, the UNESCO Institute of Pedagogy have agreed to present a roundtable, provisionally entitled “Linking Research Policy-Making and Educational Practice in and for Lifelong Learning”. Although the content was approved, it was agreed that the title should be shortened. Margaret requested that an abstract for this session is sent to the office so that it can be advertised in the programme. As Ingrid is due to meet the Institute Director at the end of May, she agreed to do this. Michel will announce the event at the opening ceremony and Margaret agreed to arrange for the production of posters to advertise this in the foyer.

4.ii Publicity by the Local Organising Committee (MK, IG)

The main publicity distribution has been the mailing of the Call for Papers to all Lisbon delegates and EERA Council Members, who also received posters. As the posters had been designed to advertise the deadline for submission, which has now passed, Ingrid requested that a new,

preferably larger version be designed to highlight the actual conference dates. It was agreed that in future 2 versions of the poster should be designed - the first to announce the deadline for abstracts and a second version to publicise the dates. The office will contact the graphics department to arrange for a second version of the poster to be designed and will send 300 copies to Ingrid for distribution within her institution and Association.

In collaboration with the University of Hamburg's Press Office, Ingrid would like to release a short text about the conference the week before the conference. This proposal was approved and it was agreed that the release should announce the most important events such as the keynotes, the UNESCO and EERJ roundtables and any new research findings to be presented at the conference. Margaret will ask Sally Brown for the title and a short paragraph about her keynote as well as asking the Convenors if they would like to contribute anything. Michel will contact Guy Neave and Ingrid will ask the German keynotes for this information. A first general release comprising the dates and key points will be made in July followed by a second, more detailed release the first week of September, which will include any information provided by Convenors. Margaret proposed that this procedure is built into the planning for all future ECERs. Ingrid also suggested holding a short Press Conference during ECER to present any interesting research findings or book launches. It was agreed that this could be held before the opening ceremony, on Wednesday 17th between 13:00-13:30.

4.iii Programme outline: main conference and pre-conference (MK, IG, KD)

The Convenors will meet prior to the AGA on Friday evening as well as on Tuesday (15:30-17:30). There will also be a joint Convenor/Council meeting on Wednesday between 11:00-13:00. Margaret reminded Ingrid that a large room to hold up to 60 people will be required for these meetings. The second Council meeting will be held at the end of the conference (Saturday, 14:30-16:30) and Margaret explained that the agenda will be shorter and more focused as people tend to tire at the end of the event.

There will be 3 social events – the joint Council/Convenors event (Tuesday, 19:30-21:30) plus the two informal social events (Wednesday and Thursday, 18:30-19:30). At the December Council meeting it was agreed that the budget for the Council/Convenor social event should be reduced. Ingrid explained that it will therefore comprise a simple finger buffet instead of a sit-down meal. The informal social events will also be finger buffets and, if the weather is bad, will be held indoors, near the foyer.

Following his successful roundtable at Lisbon, it was agreed that Michel should formally invite Angelos Agalianos to hold another roundtable session at Hamburg. The schedule of the 4 roundtables was discussed and decided as:

- Session 4 (Thursday, 1300-1430) – EERJ/OECD
- Session 5 (Thursday, 1700-1830) – UNESCO
- Session 7 (Friday, 1100-1230) – Angelos Agalianos
- Session 8 (Friday, 1300-1430) – EERJ

Ingrid noted that the UNESCO group may prefer to hold their session in their own building, just a few minutes walk from the main building. It was agreed that Martin Lawn should attend the Convenor's meeting to represent the EERJ and Margaret Kirkwood should attend in her capacity as Secretary General. The closing ceremony will last just 30 minutes and comprise 3 short presentations from Michel, a Convenor and a Pre-Conference representative. A room to hold approx 100 people will be needed for this. Margaret requested that all rooms are available between 18:30-

19:30 for Network meetings. Ingrid said that this will not be a problem and the rooms will be open until 21:30.

Kyriaki Doumas explained that 4 invited speakers (Ingrid Gogolin, Edwin Keiner, Paul Standish and Professor Marotzki) will each hold a “mini-course” at the pre-conference. A total of 42 papers have been accepted for presentation, compared to 15 at Lisbon. It was agreed that this was a positive development and that a strong postgraduate network is becoming established. A good variety of abstracts was received and doctoral students from Hamburg University, as well as Ian Stronach and his colleague Jo Frankham, who will also give feedback on the presentations, have assisted Kyriaki in the review process.

Kyriaki explained that she was finding it difficult to schedule the 42 papers and the 4 invited academic presentations into the pre-conference timeline. She felt that the pre-conference programme should begin on Monday morning instead of the afternoon. Margaret did not agree with this because it has already been advertised in the Call for Papers and on the website that the pre-conference starts at 13:00. Ingrid also felt that an earlier start time would force people to travel the previous day which would mean added expense to stay an extra night. Furthermore, the reservation for cheaper student accommodation has only been arranged to start on Monday night. Although rooms would be available in the University on the Monday morning, Ingrid explained that the local organisers wanted to use their time to make final preparations for the rest of the conference.

It was agreed that perhaps next year the pre-conference could be extended to start in the morning. However, this year it was decided that the schedule planned with the local organisers and advertised to delegates must be respected. The presentations would therefore have to fit into parallel sessions. Following a long discussion, it was finally agreed that the opening ceremony could be reduced from half an hour to just 10 minutes (13:00-13:10). Four of the 7 sessions will be allocated to the invited speakers. For each of the remaining 3 sessions, it was suggested that there could be 4 parallel slots with 4 papers in each. Each presenter would then have 20 minutes - 10 minutes to present and 10 minutes for discussion. Margaret stressed that the sessions must be well chaired so that the allocated times are respected by presenters. Michel closed the discussion by asking Kyriaki to present a draft programme of the pre-conference at the start of Sunday’s meeting.

4.iv Keynotes and EERJ Roundtable (MK, IG)

Sally Brown of Stirling University was confirmed as the first keynote, followed by Guy Neave, then Wilfried Bos & Eva Maria Lankes. Margaret asked Council which topic they preferred Sally Brown to discuss – “Quality Assessment” or, the topic she had initially asked her to speak on, “the Relationship between Research and Teaching”. Ingrid felt the assessment topic would be more interesting for the German and other European delegates. This was agreed as a suitable topic and Margaret will contact Sally to ask her change her keynote to this. Neave will discuss “the Future of Universities in Globalisation” and the Bos/Lankes keynote will discuss “International Comparative Assessment”. Council was pleased with the choice of keynotes as there will be 2 on Higher Education and 1 on schools. Martin Lawn asked for the email addresses of the keynotes to be sent to him as soon as possible so they can be contacted for the journal. Margaret will send him Brown’s address, Michel will send Neave’s and Ingrid will provide Bos and Lankes’.

Martin explained that the abstract for the EERJ roundtable entitled “European Social Science Citation Index – a Chance for Promoting European Research?” has been sent to the office for inclusion in the programme. Council requested that the office send a copy of this to them for information.

4.v Arrangements for reviewing (MK)

All but 2 networks (5 “Children and Youth at Risk” and 6 “Open and Distance Learning”) have returned their results to the office. The resignation of Jorge de Lima means that Ingrid and Michel are responsible for co-ordinating the Open Network sessions. Ingrid felt that the rule that symposia must have representatives from 3 countries was too strict, as this had prevented some submissions this year. Martin explained that this rule had been introduced to ensure diversity. Margaret proposed that Ingrid raise this point at the joint Council/Convenor meeting to see how Convenors felt about reducing the number of symposia representatives to just 2 countries.

4.vi Practical arrangements between EERA and Hamburg University (MK, IG)

It was agreed that most of the practical arrangements had already been covered in 4.i. The remaining queries were on the contents and design of the conference bag. Lesley agreed to email a list of probable contents to Dunja and explained that these would include tourist information, name badges, coffee vouchers and last minute updates to the programme. It was agreed that Ingrid could decide on the style of bag.

4.vii Contract with Hamburg University (IG, JP)

Point already discussed in 4.i.

4.viii Social programme (MK, IG)

Point already discussed in 4.iii.

4.ix Request from Deans of Education of Universitas 21 (ML)

Martin explained that Universitas 21 is a global alliance of universities (representing countries such as UK, USA, Singapore, Hong Kong, Australia). They have requested a room at ECER for a meeting and have also offered to hold a public symposium. Ingrid noted that a small room to hold 12-15 people will be needed for this. It was not felt appropriate to charge for this as rooms are not rented to other people. It was agreed that they should be invited to hold a session jointly with the EERA Council on the theme of globalization within Higher Education, as this could prove to be of interest to delegates. Session 3 (Thursday, 11:00-12:30) was allocated for this because it does not coincide with any of the other roundtables. Martin will liaise with them and provide the office with a paragraph to describe their session so that it can be advertised in the programme.

5 ECER 2004 (JP) and ECER 2005 (MK)

Jules Pieters explained the difficulties of holding ECER 2004 in Amsterdam. In order to obtain rooms in either the Universities of Amsterdam or Twente, it would have to take place at the beginning of August. Council agreed that it would be impossible to organise ECER so early and the date would also be unsuitable due to the academic holidays. It would not be possible for ECER to be organised in co-operation with the Dutch Association either as there was also a problem of securing rooms. It was also noted with some dismay that they were reluctant to be involved, as they doubted the credibility of ECER. The only possibility for a Dutch venue would be one organised by a commercial conference centre which Jules felt was not financially possible.

A suitable 2004 venue therefore needs to be found with some urgency so that plans can get underway and the venue can be announced in Hamburg. It was agreed that an attractive city with good transport links must be chosen. Martin explained that last year he requested estimated costs from convention centres in various venues, however the figures were never analysed. It was

therefore not known if the cost was viable. He felt that ECER should be held wherever it can be organised best, whether by a commercial centre or an academic institute. Margaret preferred to engage with a university venue in conjunction with a National Association representative. She will therefore contact the Convenors to see if any of their institutions could be pencilled in as future venues. As Michel has already contacted the University of Crete about the possibility of hosting ECER 2005, Margaret proposed that he ask them if they could host next year instead. However Michel was reluctant to ask them to change their plans with such short notice particularly as they are also new contacts.

One of the convention centres which provided costs for 2003 was in Prague which was deemed a popular venue. Martin proposed that the prices from the Prague convention bureau are investigated as soon as possible to see if the costs can be met. He agreed to send the costings and specifications to Michel and Margaret for investigation. Both Raymond and Ingrid noted that they have contacts at Charles University in Prague but felt that it may be too late to ask them to organise next year's event. Nevertheless, it was agreed that if the convention bureau or university could organise it, it would be useful to have the support of local academic contacts. Michel asked for their details and will write to them.

Michel explained that Crete is a real possibility for 2005 and he will meet them at the end of May for further discussions. ECER 2006 will theoretically be held in Switzerland (proposed by Bernard), possibly Geneva.

Michel closed Saturday's meeting at 5pm.

Sunday 18th May

Meeting resumed at 9.30am

Michel opened the meeting by asking Kyriaki if she had drafted her pre-conference programme within the agreed schedule. Kyriaki explained by shortening the opening ceremony, breaks, and the length of both paper and academic presentations, she had been able to free up extra time. She could therefore fit everything into 3 parallel sessions instead of 4. She agreed to email the outline to both Ingrid and the office. Michel thanked her for her efforts.

6 EERA Networks:

6.i *Annual reports and Network descriptors (MK)*

Margaret reported that each network Convenor had been asked to provide a 2002 report and a revised network descriptor for the website. However as only 12 networks had reported on their activities, she asked Council what action should be taken. Martin felt this was due to Convenors being overwhelmed with work. Michel agreed but also felt that it could be a sign that the network is not functioning well. He therefore proposed that if networks fail to provide a report on their 2003 activities, this should be taken as a sign that the network is finished. Margaret agreed with Martin since it was clear that all the networks functioned well through their programmes during ECER 2002. Perhaps some Convenors viewed the task of writing the report as a bureaucratic demand and

did not recognize its importance. However the external perception of EERA and some networks would be adversely affected. Martin said that the importance of annual network reports should be increased and, instead of just mounting them on the website, he proposed that they are circulated to Council for review. Lejf suggested that this issue should be discussed at the joint Council/Convenors meeting in Hamburg. This proposal was approved. In the meantime, Margaret will send a letter to the Convenors concerned to stress the importance of the network report, provide guidance on what information is required and set a new deadline for its submission.

6.ii Report on the Post-graduate Network (KD)

Point mostly discussed in point 4.iii. Kyriaki also requested that the postgraduate network's activities should appear in a link from the website.

6.iii Language issue (point added)

This point was added as it remained unresolved after discussion during the Council/Convenor meeting in Lisbon. Margaret stressed that this issue could not be resolved today but proposed that a meeting devoted to this issue is held in Hamburg. There was no agreement reached about this suggestion. It was agreed that delegates must be given advice on how to present. Martin proposed that native English-speaking presenters are asked to have transparencies and handouts in English to explain their paper so that everyone can understand their presentation. For papers given in German, Ingrid proposed that presenters provide transparencies and copies of the abstract in English. Margaret said that this advice could be circulated by the office, either by email or letter, to all delegates before the conference. Although it will be difficult to enforce this, it was agreed that it must be EERA policy to strongly suggest delegates comply with these recommendations.

6.iv Proposal for new network (point added, ZP)

Zoran Pavlovic presented a proposal for a new network entitled "Research on Children's Rights in Education". Support has already been provided from colleagues in England and Scotland and further backing is due from Sweden. He requested that the Council recognise the creation of the new network so that it can be established at Hamburg through a joint session with network 4 "Inclusive Education" which has already accepted a series of papers on this theme. Martin agreed that the network could be formally accepted because the conditions of having a clear rationale, convenors from 3 different countries and no conflict with any existing networks have been met. Council agreed that the topic is important and, although it overlaps with other networks such as "Social Justice" and "Children and Youth at Risk", the network theme is sufficiently distinct. As well as the joint session with network 4, it was felt that an evening slot should be allocated to enable the new network to hold a business meeting and establish itself with interested parties. Zoran expressed his gratitude to the Council for approving the network and allowing it to have a slot. He will send the details of the network to Lesley for the office records. He was also asked to send a paragraph to describe the evening session at Hamburg so that it can be advertised in the programme. Lejf mentioned that he would possibly be interested in forming a new network on "Leadership in Education". Zoran advised him to gauge interest in this at Hamburg and then make a formal application to Council. Ingrid agreed to arrange a special notice board in the foyer to advertise new networks.

Due to the large number of networks, Raymond felt that the Convenors should think of the philosophy and politics of each network. Margaret agreed that the Convenors are already aware of overlaps and narrow distinctions between some networks. It was agreed that a stronger coherence should be built among networks but this should be done through the Convenors.

7 Report on the EERA Office (LM)

7.i Follow-up from Lisbon

Lesley Morrison presented a written report on the office progress. 594 proposals have been accepted for presentation at Hamburg and 45 proposals have been rejected. These delegates have been informed by email of the result and reminded of procedures for registration. There are still approximately 30 proposal results to be confirmed. Although the deadline for Convenors to return their results was 5th May, by the 16th May, two networks, 5 “Children and Youth at Risk” and 6 “Open and Distance Learning” had still to return any results, despite repeated reminders.

It is difficult for the office to estimate how many delegates will attend as it is not known if they will definitely come until they actually register. Papers are often withdrawn closer to the conference date as delegates find they can no longer attend due to other commitments. Taking into account the 45 rejected proposals and the number of co-authors of accepted papers who have already indicated that they will not attend, the estimated maximum number of delegates who could attend is 950. Several registration forms have already been submitted and the office has started to process credit card transactions and issue invoices for fees.

Convenors have been asked to return their list of network sessions to the office by 19th May. Once these have all been received, each network will be cross-checked to avoid clashes. The overall programme will then be drafted.

Following the issue of reminder letters requesting outstanding membership fees, several payments have been made from both Associations and Institutes. Invoices for 2003 fees will be issued in June. A new membership database will be set up so that accurate records can be kept. This will include the facility to raise invoices, issue receipts and reminder letters and is due to be implemented at the end of May. Once it is in place, the office will have a much clearer indication of who has paid what.

Requests to the Office or the President to join as Association members have been received from the Icelandic Educational Research Association, the Educational Research Association of Ireland and the Austrian Association. Requests to join as Institute members have been received from the Education Research Centre of Greece, the Institute of Technology and Education at the University of Bremen, the Education Division at the Department of Planning & Development in Malta, the Children’s Research Centre at Trinity College, Dublin and St Mary’s University College at Queen’s University, Belfast.

The office also continues to receive requests from people who, although not authorised to join as Institute members, still wish to become an individual member. Lesley requested that the Council clarify if EERA still wishes to accept individual members, and if so, whether the reduced conference fee should apply to them. It was agreed that this point would be discussed and agreed under item 8.iii.

7.ii Database

The database consultant who had been working with the office on the new system since November has unfortunately now left the company. It is hoped that this will not be detrimental to the remaining phases of the system’s development. By the end of May the following updates will be in place: facility to allocate proposals to sessions and to allocate sessions to rooms; printing of the

final programme; tighter financial control for payments received which will include facility to record refunds and also provide bank lodgement audit information.

It should be noted however that the most important part of the database, i.e. the programming section has not yet been tested. It was also pointed out that the office has been inconvenienced and held back by various technical problems with either the database or the complete failure of the University server itself. On several occasions the office has been unable to access the database or to send or receive emails. Although this causes delays and frustration, unfortunately it is an internal University problem which the office has no control over.

7.iii Banking

Although it was agreed at the last Council meeting to set up a new bank account to incorporate a Euro account, this action has not yet been taken for several practical reasons. Due to a late decision by Council to offer a low GDP reduction for Lisbon delegates, the office spent 2 months clearing up refunds at the end of 2002. At the same time, a great deal of work was involved in designing and setting up the new database. Furthermore, John Queen had advised against such a change until after Hamburg to avoid extra upheaval in the still difficult system of financial management. To change the account at the beginning of the year would also cause problems with the 2002 Audit as the Auditors would have to work between 2 different accounts, and would also impose an extra charge for this. Changing the account will therefore be re-investigated after Hamburg.

Michel expressed his dissatisfaction by arguing that as the decision to change the account had been taken at the last Council meeting, the change should have been made. Margaret defended her decision by explaining that detailed investigations had been made by the office at the end of 2002 but it became evident that the procedure was not as simple as it first appeared. She stressed the heavy workload of the office following Lisbon because of the refunding process and work on the new database, which will ensure that EERA has a good database for every ECER to come. She argued that the account will be changed, it has just not happened as quickly as initially hoped. She stressed that instead of acting quickly, EERA must take the time to make the right decision since more was at stake than simply opening a new EURO account which any bank could offer the types of facilities provided by the bank, such as how credit card transactions are dealt with, can have a considerable impact on the workload of the office staff.

7.iv Staffing contracts (MK)

Margaret explained that Lesley's secondment as Administrator ends in November 2003. One of the part-time office secretaries, Nan Lawless, is also on a temporary contract until December 2003 and the other, Terri Freeman, has a 6-month renewable contract. As employees of Strathclyde University, Margaret will have to discuss the extension of these contracts with the Personnel department. It was agreed that EERA needs stability in its administration and the current staff work very well together. Furthermore, new procedures have been implemented and documented for the future. From a local organiser's point of view, Ingrid was pleased that the office worked well.

8 EERA Finances:

8.i Treasurer's report (JP)

Jules presented an oral report. In January 2003 there was £97,000 (€135,000) in the high interest account. There was a small shortage of £12,000 (€16,500) due to uncollected membership fees. It

was hoped that now the membership administration has been resumed, income will increase. The cost of ECER 2003 is approximately £70,000 (€100,000). Depending on how many delegates are members and how many pay the early bird fee, the estimated income will be £110,000 (€150,000). A healthy surplus is therefore predicted. However Margaret reminded the Council that the Office running costs (around £65,000 or €90,000) and other EERA expenses must be met from any surplus.

Jules expressed his gratitude to John Queen for his involvement and for submitting a financial report which provides a good overview of EERA's day to day finances. Michel requested that the Council are sent regular reports on the status of the EERA's income and expenditure to provide a general idea of the financial situation. Margaret agreed with this suggestion but stressed this is the responsibility of the Treasurer. The office will provide the necessary information when it is requested by him.

8.ii *John Queen's report – financial monitoring and Audit (MK)*

Margaret explained that John Queen is the Treasurer of the Scottish Association, one of EERA's founding members. When he started working with the office, the financial situation was in chaos. On the basis of John's now considerable experience of assisting EERA to manage its financial procedures, John recommends that EERA set up separate accounts – a Euro account held by the Treasurer, a conference account, a membership account and an internal University of Strathclyde account. Jules agreed with this saying it would give a proper overview of EERA's different sources of income and expenditure. At present, for example, membership fees are mixed in with conference income in the one account, whereas with separate accounts, membership income could be clearly identified. Margaret and Jules will discuss this in more detail and decide on how best to arrange this.

Margaret explained that there has been a past problem with EERA Audits because since 1999, the Association has never signed off its accounts for audit. This matter has now been resolved through John and it is hoped that the auditing process can soon be brought up to date.

8.iii *Membership subscriptions and member benefits (MK)*

Michel explained that at the AGA it was agreed to increase the fees for 2003 by 20% as they had remained unchanged since 1995. Margaret requested that the Council decide on whether to accept individual membership and also whether the size of the Association/Institute should have a bearing on the fee paid. She explained that although SERA had paid their 2003 fees, they requested that the fees are made more equitable for smaller associations. SERA, with about 150 members pays the same amount as BERA which has over 1000 members. Likewise, it was noted that the Austrian National Association are keen to join but, as a smaller, new association, the fee is too high for them. Ingrid proposed that they be allowed to join now and pay a reduced fee until they have become established, when the fee can be reviewed. Council approved this decision and agreed that the size of the association or institute should be taken into account from now on. Margaret also explained that at present there are too many fee bands for countries with different levels of GDP and recommended that this be simplified to mirror the high/low GDP bands in place for conference fees.

It was agreed that a proposal to restructure the fees to a simple system of high/low GDP and large/small association or institute is made at the AGA, because this is a policy decision which affects all members. By the end of June Michel, Margaret and Jules will prepare a proposal for the new scheme of fees which will be circulated to Council for comment. It will then be presented at the AGA for final approval.

The benefits of membership were also discussed. Martin highlighted that, despite repeated requests from the office, Council has never properly discussed the benefits of membership. Margaret queried whether Institute members were entitled to the reduced conference fee, as in the Call for Papers the only reference is to a reduction for Association members (this was also the case for Lisbon). Martin said that the position was that both Association and Institute members were entitled to the reduced conference fee and this is advertised on the website. It was therefore agreed that this should still be the case. As there is no longer a newsletter, the other benefit to members is free access to the EERJ.

On the question of individual membership, it was agreed that for someone within the EU, the onus is on them to join their National Association which affiliates to EERA. Only if they are from a country which does not have a National Association or Institute affiliated to EERA should they be allowed to join as an individual member. Council also agreed that people living outside the EU should be allowed to join as individual members. Although individual members would have no voting rights, they would benefit from the reduced conference fee (however the reduction should not be more than the fee). Michel proposed to confirm this decision at the AGA.

9 Communications:

9.i EERJ (ML)

Martin explained that in the period Jan-May 2003, 1400 articles were downloaded from the 2002 EERJ volumes which was very encouraging. As well as being widely used, he felt that both the quality and content was strong. Although subscription to the journal is currently free, the plan is that university libraries will eventually buy a licence. There are subscribers in 59 countries and it was noted that the EERJ now has a presence in Greece, Italy, Turkey and Hungary, countries where previously EERA had problems with making links. It was agreed that this was a success especially given past distribution problems with the newsletter.

Among EERA members there is a 29% usage by AIDIPE, 23% by BERA, 11% among the Nordic Association. There are also 445 individual subscribers, but it was felt that some of them could actually be members who do not realise they are already entitled to access. Martin therefore proposed that Council remind their National Associations about the journal to encourage further use. He will send Council a text about the journal for them to distribute to their National Associations. It was agreed that the journal was a successful and growing initiative which is helping to increase EERA's credibility and visibility worldwide.

9.ii Website (MK)

Margaret reported that further work was required on the new website, for which there would be an additional cost. As there would be a gap between the transfer of information from the old site to the new, she had decided that the best time to make the transfer was the week of, or immediately after Hamburg. It would not be practical to make the change now because delegates need to access important conference information online and the site could therefore not disappear temporarily. Martin felt that the cost of maintaining the website was high, particularly as the University of Birmingham are not being asked to do a great deal of updates. He also thought there should not be an additional cost for mounting the new site, but that this should be covered by the maintenance

costs already being paid. Margaret will ask Strathclyde University for an estimate of how much they would charge to host and maintain the website and compare this to what we currently pay.

10 EERA Member Organisations and Council membership:

10.i Invitations/requests to join Council (MC)

Michel has contacted the President of the Greek National Association but has not received a response. As discussed in item 8.iii, the Austrian Association has informally joined but request a reduced fee. Margaret asked Michel to officially welcome them but indicate that, although Council have accepted their request for a reduced fee, this proposal needs to be finalised at the AGA. The other Association requests to join, outlined in item 7.i were welcomed.

10.ii Arrangements for co-opting a Convenor on the Council (MK)

Margaret reminded Council that at the Convenor meeting in Hamburg, a Convenor representative to sit on Council will be elected. She felt that the Convenors may wish to elect not one but 2 representatives and asked if this met Council approval. It was felt that it would be too expensive to support 2 representatives due to the costs involved in both attending Council meetings. It was therefore agreed that Convenors should be asked to elect just one representative. In response to Zoran's question as to why EERA must meet this cost, Martin explained that as Convenors, they do not have a National Association to fund their attendance at Council meetings. It was felt that having such a representative to raise Convenor issues at Council was a positive step. Margaret noted that when the Convenors elect their representative in Hamburg, this person will then join the second Council meeting at Hamburg as their representative, for a term of office still to be agreed between the Council and convenors.

10.iii EERA President Elect and Treasurer

Jorge de Lima's resignation was noted with regret. As Michel's Presidency ends in December 2003, Jorge's resignation means that there is no President Elect. Jules Pieters explained that once his term of office as President of the Dutch Association ends, he can no longer sit on Council and so will step down as Treasurer from January 2004. He will therefore attend the next Council meeting as Treasurer and his successor will attend as the Dutch representative. Michel stressed that both a new President Elect and Treasurer must be nominated by the end of 2003.

Martin asked Michel if he would be willing to continue for 2004, as long as a President Elect is nominated at Hamburg to ensure a smooth handover. Michel offered to continue as President for a further year until December 2004.

It was noted that as Ingrid's term of office ends in December 2003, there will be a new German representative. There will also be a new Dutch member, replacing Jules and there is already a new Swiss representative. Although it was agreed that this will renew the Council, Margaret stressed that a new President Elect and Treasurer must have a period of handover. To ask new members to assume these roles could prove risky as they will be unaware of how EERA operates.

Ingrid felt it would be best for EERA if Michel agreed to continue for a further year until a suitable replacement is found. Raymond proposed Martin as President Elect because, as a past Secretary

General, he knows how EERA works and is well acquainted with the networks. Martin requested some time to consider this but agreed to respond to Michel shortly. If Martin does not agree, Ingrid proposed asking the new German, Dutch and Swiss representatives to think this over.

11 EERA Development:

11.i 6th Framework (MC)

Martin explained that he is thinking of proposing a research infrastructure bid for March 2004 which could allow EERA to become a strong foundation for research within Europe. It would, among other things, propose the creation of a searchable database of past conference papers to pool the resources within EERA's research networks and spread this information and knowledge across Europe. It was agreed that although this would be an ambitious project, the idea of pooling resources and benefiting from each other's research was a good idea.

The Expression of Interest which Jules had submitted earlier on EERA's behalf could also be worked into a full proposal.

11.ii Relationships with other research associations: EARLI, Canadian Association (MC)

Michel has written to the EARLI President several times to invite him to Hamburg but has never received a response. It was agreed that EERA can only try to make contact so many times. Ingrid suggested phoning him to make more direct contact. Michel agreed to try this. Jules explained that as a new EARLI President is due, perhaps this explains the lack of response. Martin felt that they would approach EERA when they wanted to and in the meantime, EERA should not be concerned.

Michel explained that EERA have been offered a slot at the Canadian and American Association conferences and asked if EERA should accept and organise for a Council or Convenor representative to attend. It was agreed that while an official contact with America and Canada should be maintained, EERA should concentrate on European activities instead. Moreover, EERA can not afford to send a representative to these events. Margaret proposed raising this at the joint Council/Convenor meeting to see if anyone wishes to attend. If so, they could ask their institution to fund them. Zoran asked if EERA could provide partial support but it was felt that this would not be possible.

11.iii Policy direction (ML)

See 11.i

12 AOCB

Nothing discussed.

Michel closed the meeting at 13:00 and thanked everyone for their attendance.