



Minutes of the EFAS General Assembly on June 8th, 2017 in Interlaken (Kurhaus Interlaken)

1. Welcome from Chair:

Dr. Theresa Pitt welcomes the attendants and thanks Martin Kompis and his team for organizing an excellent EFAS congress and giving the opportunity for General Assembly meeting.

2. Attendance and Apologies:

B. Kollmeier reports that the following 20 countries are represented (person executing the voting rights are listed first):

Austria (Stephan), Belgium (Wouters, Laureyns), Bosnia Herzegovina (Spiric), Croatia (Trotic, Veselic, Bilic), Czech Republic (Syka), France (Artieres), Germany (Kollmeier, Hoppe), Ireland (Pitt), Israel (Attias), Netherlands (Goedegebuure), Norway (Vik, Vinay), Poland (Sulkowski), Portugal (Cravo, Santos), Romania (Georgescu, Cozma), Russia (Tavartkiladze, Boboshko), Slovenia (Zupan, Urbancic), Sweden (Stenfeld, Uhlen), Switzerland (Dillier, Kompis, Veraguth), Turkey (Konukseven, Atas), United Kingdom (Dawes)

Only Hungary (Kiss) did not show up even though indicated. Apologies have been sent by Greece (Balatsouras), Spain (Jerez), Finland (Kokkonen), most of whom sent in the votes by e-mail.

Guests: Gonca Sennaroglu, Songul Aksoy, Zarah Polat, Mine Baydan (Turkey), Nicole Sannos (Portugal), Boran Donarai, Annes Claes (Belgium), Griet Mertens (Belgium), Dejau Mudsein, Matej Sisto, Eyup Kara, Federica Di Berardino, Shaden Bsoul-Criem, Gal Nitsan (Israel), Jan de Laat (Netherlands)

No reaction to the invitation (neither apology nor acknowledgement of receipt of

the invitation) have been received from the following N=11 countries:

Denmark (Wajn), Estonia (Kruustyk), Iceland (Sindrason) Italy (Martini), Latvia (Kise), Lithuania (Uloziene), Malta (Balzan), Serbia& Montenegro (Mikic), Slovakia (Profant), Ukraine (Golubok-Abyzova)

	<p><u>Action Point</u></p> <p>The board and all members are asked to help establishing contact, preferably to the respective national audiological societies to reactivate the contacts.</p>	<p>All members</p>
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3. Minutes of GA in Cork, September 2016:

The minutes of the Cork meeting (September 2016) was sent around and no objections from the members were recorded. Hence, the approved minutes were put on the EFAS website (www.efas.ws) in November 2016. The delegates unanimously support this procedure.

4. Matters arising (not otherwise covered on Agenda):

None

5. Chairperson's report:

Dr. Theresa Pitt addressed the following issues:

- Good communication remains an overriding goal and to this end, there have been significant change to the EFAS website since Congress in Istanbul. More photographs and the Aims of EFAS are now on the opening page.
- Meeting and General Assembly 2016 in University College Cork, Ireland, September 15th and 16th, discussion about e-learning, increasing links and our EFAS website and academic links developed in Leuven in 2014. Ongoing action...All willing volunteers to support this are welcome.
- Notion of international e-learning needs work, short course collaborations developing between countries. The funded project to share exam

questions, supported by University of Haifa, had not produced a convincing technology platform. This will be discussed further.

- Working Groups:

1. EFAS School Entry Screening WG, under Professor Jan Wouters. Concrete plans now available to start a major comparative study in up to 7 countries. I have started School Entry Hearing and Vision data collection in Ireland, which I hope to present to the EFAS Working Group tomorrow. Many thanks to Jan.

2. WG Audiology screening and services for Intellectual Disability, under Melina Willems from Flanders and Special Olympics have completed a significant survey and reported 2016 in Cork, Ireland, and again here in Interlaken.

Dr. Pitt further expressed her sincere thanks to all the current and retiring Board members and the Search Committee members and good Luck to Françoise Sterkers-Artières as she succeeds as the new Chairperson.

6. Treasurer's report:

Prof. Kompis reports on the period from August 1st, 2016 – April 30th, 2017. The income of approximately 7k€ is balanced with the expenses of approximately 5k€. This indicates an increase of the current balance of the society by 2k€.

Overall, EFAS can be considered as financially healthy, with a solid base. The largest expenses have been a project grant on e-audiology to the group chaired by Prof. Attias, and EFAS meeting in Cork from September 15th – 16th 2016, chaired by Dr. Theresa Pitt. Most member states of EFAS have already paid their membership fees which are greatly acknowledged. The remaining member societies are thanked for paying as fast as possible.

In 2017/2018, expenses will cover the scholarships for EFAS 2017 in Interlaken and pursuing the general aim to spend EFAS money well for Audiology.

The Auditors Arne Vik (Norway) and Wieslaw Sulkowski (Poland) received the full report on May 5th, 2017 and reported to the General Assembly, that the financials are being dealt with in an accurate and transparent way so that the member societies are recommended to accept the treasurer's report.

	<u>Decision</u>	The voting members accepted unanimously (with one abstain by M. Kompis) the report.
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7. Report on the ongoing Interlaken Congress 2017:

Prof. Kompis reported that approximately 415 participants were recorded so that financially the break-even point of the conference appears to have been reached. The organization went smoothly thanks to the professional conference organizer (IMK, Basel) who did a very good job in pursuing all the organizational details. The scientific program has been positively received by the participants.

8. Report on progress for the Lisbon Congress 2019:

Dr. Melissa Cravo reported as a substitute for Dr. Humberto Martins about the EFAS 2019 congress in **Lisbon to be held from May 22nd -25th , 2019** and invited all EFAS members and their society members to attend the conference in large numbers. The professional conference organizer is selected (MCI), the congress venue is booked and the hotels have been pre-booked. The next steps will include the launch of a website with the basic enhancement, the outline of the conference topics, the outline of the budget and negotiations with the EFAS Board, sponsors, and exhibitors.

9. EFAS congress scholarships 2017:

Prof. Attias reported about the small number of only 10 applications for EFAS scholarships (mostly from 2 countries) and emphasised the importance, that the possibility of the scholarships should be distributed actively among all EFAS member societies in order to encourage potential candidates to apply. Preference is given to first-time visitors of the EFAS conference that nevertheless exhibit a

high quality of the contribution to be presented. The following applicants were awarded with scholarships and were asked to come to the podium to receive their certificates:

Ms. Mine Baydan-Aydemir, Turkey

Ms. Annes Julia Claes, Belgium

Ms. Annes Gal Nitsan, Israel

Ms. Bsoul-Criem Shaden, Israel

Mr. Stefan Handrick, Germany

10. Election of new EFAS Board (period 2017-2019)

The report of the search committee with the name of the candidates have been submitted to all member societies/voting and nonvoting members in time before the General Assembly. At first, a discussion and voting was held if the previous secretary-general B. Kollmeier and the previous past chairperson Jan Wouters, who both served for already 6 years on the board, are acceptable as candidates for other offices within the EFAS board or not. To facilitate the discussion, Jan Wouters and B. Kollmeier left the room. Subsequently, the General Assembly voted unanimously that both candidates are acceptable as candidates (i.e. that the EFAS bylaws are interpreted in a way that no one should serve *on the same office in the EFAS board* for more than 6 years).

Subsequently, the post of the chairperson-elect and the secretary-general were voted on in separate, closed voting.

 <u>Decision</u>	With a majority of votes, B. Kollmeier was elected as vice chairperson/chairperson-elect and Jan Wouters as secretary-general in the period 2017- 2019.
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Both candidates accept this vote and thank for the trust of the delegates. The chairperson T. Pitt also thanked the other candidates (S. Steinfeld, J.Attias and U. Hoppe) for their candidature.

For the post of treasurer, the only candidate M. Kompis (in office since 2013) was re-elected in an open vote unanimously (one abstain by M. Kompis).

According to the bylaws, Dr. Françoise Artières-Sterkers will step up from vice-chairperson to chairperson and Dr. Theresa Pitt will step down from chairperson to past-chairperson for the subsequent voting period 2017-2019.

The search committee was voted on with closed ballots with the result that Norbert Dillier, Özlem Konukseven, and Kurt Stephan were voted into office.

11. Voting about EFAS congress location in 2021:

The 3 candidates Romania (presented by M. Georgescu), Israel (presented by Josef Attias) and Croatia (presented by Robert Trotic) had sent in their bids prior to the General Assembly with all necessary details for the delegates to vote on.

An overview to compare the important points of the bids has been sent out to the delegates before by B. Kollmeier. During the General Assembly, the three candidates had the chance to present their bids in a 5-minutes presentation. This procedure was adapted to ensure a maximum of transparency and equal opportunity for each of the three bidders. It was clearly stated that all three bids are excellent alternatives, that any decision between the bids is very hard to do and any decision against a certain bid should by no means be interpreted as a failure. Rather, EFAS and all delegates can be proud that such attractive alternatives for the EFAS Congress 2021 have been prepared.

 <u>Decision</u>	In the final voting, the majority of votes went to Croatia (Sibenik, presented by Robert Trotic) which was therefore determined as the location for the EFAS Congress 2021.
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12. Short report from EFAS working groups:

The working group on school age hearing screening was reported by Jan Wouters who reported about the consensus about a methodology for hearing screening at approximately 5 years (language-independent sound ear check with

relevant sounds, child friendly pictures which was developed and optimized by partners Netherlands/Leuven). In addition to arriving at a methodology for taking the incidence of hearing loss until the 18th year, the comparison of SHS data with NHS data bases should be performed to extract information about prevalence.

For the working group on audiology and intellectual disabilities, Dr. Melissa Cravo (Portugal) reported about a questionnaire for identifying current practices across Europe which was sent out to EFAS representatives (23 responded from 22 countries). Based on these work, guidelines will be prepared.

13. Any other business:

According to an invitation by the incoming chairperson Dr. Françoise Artières-Sterkers, the General Assembly in 2018 will be held in Montpellier in combination with a 2-day scientific meeting (details to be announced).

The General Assembly 2019 will be held in Lisbon on Mai 23rd, 2019.

14. Handing over of presidency/Close of meeting:

The incoming chairperson, Dr. Françoise Artières-Sterkers is greeted by the outgoing chairperson Dr. Theresa Pitt who closes the session with many thanks to all participants and for the organization.

Interlaken, June 2017

Signed: Birger Kollmeier (past secretary-general).