

Report on Regional Meetings - Gothenburg, AEC Congress 2016

Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, Israel, Lebanon, Egypt
Council member: Evis Sammoutis

Round table of introductions

There was a round table of introductions as there were a few new members attending from Greece and Turkey. The members were asked to shortly explain how their institutions relate to the AEC and if they feel well represented by the AEC Council.

The general response was that most members of the regional group regularly attend the AEC meetings / congresses and some of them are deeply involved in working groups and platforms. They also communicated that they attend these meetings not because they have specific issues with which they need support, but mostly to keep an up-to-date perspective of current trends in higher education and to see examples of best practice across Europe and elsewhere. The group also reiterated that they have faith and trust in the work of the AEC Council. There was a general feeling for the need to have more council members coming from different regions to ensure as much diversity as possible as well as to give more voice to concerns specific to the Mediterranean and other regions.

Feedback on the Congress program/content so far

The members liked the themes of the parallel sessions, and they found the topics to be very attractive. They also mentioned that the general mood and energy of the Congress has been very positive. The group also commented favorably on all the sessions they had attended. A particularly timely, relevant and important issue was the inclusion of themes relating to the refugee crisis, and everyone from the group was very positive about the presence of such sessions. “Addressing the Challenge of Refugees in our Institutions” was a very important session for Mediterranean-based institutions.

The group was particularly positive about the participation of students in most conferences. The session “How do you make sure a student’s voice is heard in your institution” gave even more focus to student-centered approaches, concerns and thoughts and gave all participants a deeper insight into the student’s perspective. Furthermore, sessions such as “Knowledge, Skills and Competences: The Revised AEC Learning Outcomes” have given some fresh ideas to the regional group members about implementing coherent and up-to-date targets. The session itself helped this knowledge transfer by shifting from a structural, theoretical overview to a more practical approach, offering concrete and tangible suggestions for possible curriculum reviews.

The group was pleased that non-Western music and genres were also represented in the Congress in a more visible manner; they felt that previous congresses were much more “Eurocentric”, and they hope this trend will continue and perhaps even expand in future Congress themes.

Some of the sessions felt a little too general for some of the members of the group, who also commented that there was not enough overlap for some of the sessions. Finally, they asked for the involvement of speakers from more countries in the sessions, and they reiterated their willingness to take part in future panels. One small criticism was that whereas several sessions involved themes and issues related to the region (e.g., refugee crisis), the regional group members were not, in their majority, involved or consulted for possible input. They, therefore, asked to be more involved, if possible, for similar themes in the future, as they feel they have important, vernacular experience and a unique perspective, which can be of significant benefit for future sessions.

‘Joker’ topic: Proposal for changes to the AEC election rules

The conversation in the group then transferred to the 'Joker' topic and the proposal for changes in the AEC election system rules on which participants would be asked to vote the following day. The overwhelming majority of this group was not in favor of the proposed changes for several reasons. They felt that some of the changes seemed undemocratic in the sense that members would not be able to vote for candidates from other regions. The reaction from the group was that one should be able to vote for whomever they want without restrictions and regional zones. It also became apparent that with the proposed new rules, this region would be able to secure "permanent" participation in the AEC Council. The concern here was about the financial aspects of council member participation, mentioning that most organizations from the group could not afford it. This would mean that the region could effectively end up without any representation after all, and a seat would be effectively left vacant. Finally, some members of the group felt that the adoption of geographical criteria seemed discriminatory and would further create zones of exclusion, economic and otherwise. The group felt that AEC should be looking for more elements of integration rather than divisions into regions and that elections should not be about voting for representatives of specific countries but rather for individuals who represent specific sets of skills and talents that can be helpful to the entire corpus.

AEC services which could be (further) developed

When members were asked about which AEC services could be (further) developed and whether they would support the idea of developing a webpage area for institutions' libraries to ensure an exchange of resources between institutions, the group responded that, in principle, they agree with this idea, but they also mentioned that the main concern is the digitalization of the libraries. Not all institutions have digital resources, and this can create complications in the ability of some institutions to participate. In addition, there was concern about the ability of organizations to cover potential fees for participation. There was an update given to the regional group participants about the AEC communication strategy and developments, and the group commented favorable on these developments.

The group was later asked whether they would support the development of a European online Application System (EASY) to facilitate staff and student mobility, what their needs/challenges in this regard are, and if there is one system, whether they would use it.

The group's response was that the idea behind EASY is a very good one and that it is in general a very useful system. A grave concern was that the fee is too high for some of the institutions and makes their participation impossible. They also feel that this issue can create a de facto exclusion of organizations with limited financial resources from such expensive systems. On the other hand, the group also felt that most of the times, the exchanges between institutions are very personalized and that this system will help, but will only remove some of the burden involved. Finally, such a system could potentially create complications as some institutions are part of universities and have limited control over the number of digital resources for which they can sign up.

The next topic of discussion was about what kind of services AEC could develop that the institutions would need and be willing to pay for. Here, the topic of entrepreneurship was clearly a subject that was very popular, and the members identified a strong need to have more workshops on the above subject matter. Another theme was that of advocacy on specific issues, where some participants mentioned that AEC could be of particular assistance.

Revision of the AEC National Overviews of Higher Music Education Systems, Pre-College and Music Teacher Education Systems (both classroom and instrumental/vocal teachers)

The regional group was updated about the progress regarding the revision of the AEC National Overviews of Higher Music Education Systems, a document that will be used mainly for advocacy purposes.

Germany, Austria, Switzerland

Council Member: Joerg Linowitzki, Stefan Gies, AEC CEO

The meeting was attended by 42 representatives from Austria, Germany and Switzerland (as many as never before) and two guests.

- Stefan and Jörg welcome the participants, also in the name of Eirik, who is unfortunately not able to chair this meeting due to other business.
- Short feedback on the current progress of the congress:
 - The brainstorming session has been very well accepted as a suitable format, but it was also complained that those who had proposed the topics were asked only by very short notice to present their input.
 - It was criticized that only a few of the sessions were directly linked to the overall congress title (Diversity, Identity, Inclusion). - A discussion came up whether the congress title should be binding on all or only parts of the sessions.
 - The new format in which the information forum was presented is appealing.
 - There were complaints about the advertising character of the MusiQuE session. If so, this should be clearly announced as advertising, not as a seemingly neutral information.
- Reinhard Schäfertöns and Stefan Gies report on the finally unsuccessful attempts to take the leadership of the UdK Berlin along to commit to host the 2019 AEC annual congress. It would be welcomed if another German venue could be found ready to take over the 2019 congress.
- The majority is not interested in a regional website.
- Many institutions have only slight interest in EASY, due to the fact that both federal state governments in Nordrhein-Westfalen and Bavaria do invest a lot of money (in competition with each other!) to develop a conservatoire-specific campus management software, which they want to offer as paid services on the market.
- Martin Ullrich thanks Jörg Linowitzki for many years of representing the German interest as a AEC Council and ExCom member.

Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Iceland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania

Council Member: Kaarlo Hildén

Persons attending their first regional meeting were introduced and the relation between ANMA and the AEC was explained.

Minutes from Glasgow regional meeting were discussed to follow up developments

It was noted that the planning of the ANMA thematic day was of importance and that many of the issues will be on the agenda this year as well.

The agenda for the meeting was discussed and members were asked if they had feedback about the congress or any specific wishes towards the AEC that should be discussed:

Lobbying for the important role of music in education was brought up as a key area for the AEC. A wish was expressed that the AEC could be even more active in advocating this. The European Agenda for Music -initiative was mentioned and the challenges in taking it forward as collaboration between several organizations. It was noted that the relevance of the HEI's in the music sector should also be more clearly defined. How are we relevant? Where could and should the dialogue between the whole music sector and music institutions take place?

The feedback collected in the previous regional meeting had had an impact on the planning of the congress; participants felt that the changes made to the programme made the experience much more useful and interactive.

No other issues were brought up.

The Annual Meeting of ANMA:

Claus Olesen, secretary general of ANMA, reported on the planning of the upcoming ANMA annual meeting. The preliminary theme for the thematic day of the annual meeting in Tromsø is the role of traditional music (including Sami music culture, which is a special focus in Tromsø). It was commented, that “traditional” rises some taxonomical questions. Folk music is suggested as replacement. Immigrant music could be mentioned specifically. The theme has to do with the meeting points between musical traditions. How can the institutions enable students to “move between silos” of traditions? The theme is promising but continuous debate on the wording. “Tradition” -> “indigenous”. It is suggested, that the meeting could start a discussion: “Where the genre classification applies and where it doesn’t in music?” These taxonomical pathways don’t work always and they endanger some music (which is excluded). How could we be more inclusive stylistically as institutions? There is no time for deep philosophical debate in a one-day conference, but the day could provide examples, inspiration and new perspectives on a well-defined theme around traditions, musical cultures and diversity. It was added that all departments could benefit from an increased exchange of ideas between classical, jazz and folk.

ANMA mentoring initiative:

Claus Olesen reports back on the mentoring initiative made during the ANMA annual meeting in 2016. Very few members have volunteered as mentors, more names are needed if we want to proceed. After the discussion the following persons volunteered as possible mentors:

- Henrik Sveidahl
- Peter Tornquist
- Riitta Tötterström
- Astrid Elbek
- Anna Maria Koziomitzis
- Claus Olesen
- Kaarlo Hildén

The suggested mentoring initiative can be defined based on the interests of the mentor and the mentee and is therefore a flexible concept.

EASY:

EASY is introduced. Organisations willing to join the pilot are asked to contact the company directly. There is a wide interest towards the further development of the service.

National Overviews:

The process of updating the AEC national overviews was explained. Participants were told that institutions will receive a first draft of their national overview in a few months and that they are asked to comment and edit the descriptions. Very few knew of the existence of these national overviews, and had therefore no comments about their usefulness.

Would you support the idea of developing a webpage area for institution’s libraries to ensure a matchmaking of resources between institutions (this would be jointly offered with the International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres (IAML))?:

The idea was supported, but more detailed information about the suggestion would be needed in order to discuss the suggestion further.

Issues on the General Assembly agenda:

Participants were asked whether there were issues on the GA agenda that the participants would like to discuss.

Election Rules were discussed based on the information in the Reader. It was mentioned, that the new voting system would be constituency based. The change would make each region responsible of their own region and their representation, which would have an effect on the role of the council and the individual council members. Regional networks as ANMA can be an effective way to discuss and consolidate regional interests, if the national level collaboration is well organized. It was commented, that representation should be based on issues, not on areas. What is the nature of the “pressure” for the change? Would this change the stability of AEC? Kaarlo answered, that some institutions and nations do not feel that their representation is sufficient. The problems have their roots on different national challenges and expectations towards the AEC. It is important to hear the signals. In the new model the AEC should perhaps consider paying the costs of the council members trips, because otherwise some institutions are excluded. There is, however, no funding for this. A comment was made about the thinking behind the division of countries into regions, why is e.g. France in the same group with Nordic countries? Kaarlo answered, that much consideration has been given to the problem, but it is difficult to divide in a way that would enable a fair and equal division both in size (students, number of institutions), cultures and geographic regions. There has been an overrepresentation of the western and northern regions in the council compared to the number of members in different parts of the EU. It is a result of voting, not a conscious planning.

U-Multirank was discussed. The question was raised, whether this would end in a lot of data collecting without a clear purpose. The link between accreditation and U-multirank was discussed. There is no clear link between, but the data produced by the U-Multirank can well be used as a part of the institutions’ quality assurance systems.

Peter Tornqvist comments, that the U-Multirank is valuable because we have had the opportunity to define the criteria used and the institution can further define what components are of interest. These factors should be noted when voting of U-Multirank.

Poland, Belarus, Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Georgia, Armenia ***Council Member: Grzegorz Kurzyński***

At the annual AEC Congress in Goteborg from 9 Central and Eastern Europe countries (Poland, Belarus, Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Georgia, Armenia) were represented only 3 - Armenia, Belarus and Poland. As in previous years the costs associated with the participation in the Congress were the reason for the absence of the representatives of other countries. At the Regional Meeting took part representatives of only two countries: Armenia (1) and Poland (8).

At the round table of introductions all participants expressed their opinion that they were well represented by the AEC Council. Polish Rectors are in constant contact during organized every 2-3 months meetings of the Conference of Rectors of Universities of Art in Poland (KRUA) where they discuss all kind of issues pertaining to their activity (also participation in activities of the AEC). They expressed their opinions that their needs were fully addressed by the AEC. Polish Rectors (or Vice-Rectors) regularly attend the AEC Congresses and meetings. Academy of Music in Krakow participated in the UMR pilot project; Academy of Music in Wroclaw also took part in the PHExcel pilot project.

About the Congress programme: there were very different opinions. The second day presentations (Parallel Sessions I and II) were assessed not very enthusiastically, parallel Session III gathered good reviews. In general opinion - one can noticed that the topics of particular Sessions were not enough connected with the area of “real” music.

It was emphasized that the first session on Thursday (10 November) *Workshop and training for Peer-Reviewers organized by MusiQuE* was very interesting.

About AEC services which could be developed: All Rectors supported very enthusiastically the idea of developing a webpage area for institution’s libraries. EASY pilot project was also well received (there were some doubts about the possible future problems connected with protection of personal data).

Lack of funds was the reason that the issue of AEC additional services was treated with great caution.

Due to the lack of time there was no discussion on the Revision of the AEC National Overviews of Higher Music Education systems. About the Pre-College and Music Teacher Education systems - some of the Polish Rectors are familiar with this issue, because one of the sessions connected with Full Score project was held in Wroclaw - Poland.

UK, Ireland

Council Member: Deborah Kelleher

Positives:

1. Good content (some individual areas for special praise were the entrepreneur and the refugee session)
2. The format provided good opportunities to hear other member voices in greater numbers
3. Enhanced input from the students was noted as growing organically and well
4. The keynote speaker was praised
5. The brainstorming sessions were interesting

Things to work on:

1. Could the parallel sessions have a stronger clarity about what they wish to achieve? Perhaps be 'curated' more by the moderator (this would take forward planning with the moderator)
2. Could we have statistics on how many member conservatoires teach more than music alone? The group sees interdisciplinarity as something to bring more to the fore in the future at AEC
3. The students wondered if there could be 'parallel parallel sessions' for them at the Congress? Sessions which more directly related to areas of special interest.
4. In terms of the parallel sessions it would be handy to spend five minutes at the end of every session to collect feedback which could possibly mean that the Closing Remarks session would not be necessary

Other questions addressed:

1. What did we think of the suggested amendment of the voting procedure? Generally not in favour of the change
2. Would the members support the ideas of the web page of institution's libraries as a matchmaking resource? Yes
3. Would the members be interested in a music campus specific management IT system? Not enthusiastic as CUKAS system already in place

What kind of services could AEC develop which your institution might need and be willing to pay for?

1. Tracking graduates, testing impact of the conservatoire on their earnings/future path
2. Student participation development consultancy (guiding conservatoires in engaging with the student voice)
3. Sessions from the Congress to be brought to individual institutions (eg. Refugee presentation/Entrepreneurship workshop)
4. Would AEC consider developing a Consultancy list/register as part of its services, which could focus on specific topics of concern to conservatoires?

Other issues:

1. The UK subsection of the regional group is deeply concerned about the impact of Brexit and wishes to remain resolutely committed to its European partners and colleagues. It hopes for shared lobbying with AEC when it comes to specific issues of mobility, Erasmus and other issues that may emerge.
2. As the student voice is getting stronger in the AEC and this Congress has identified an unevenness in conservatoires' approaches to engaging with students at a strategic level, it was suggested that AEC might work with the student working groups to devise a Charter or other document, which outlines good practice/basic principles in this area

Netherlands, Belgium

Council Member: Harrie van den Elsen, Report: Peter Swinnen

Present: Lies Colman (AP), Annouk Van Moorsel (AP), Jef Cox (AEC), Peter Swinnen, Jan D'Haene (Koninklijk Conservatorium Brussel), Peter Dejans (Orpheus), Thomas De Baets (Luca), Jeroen D'Hoe (Luca), Stéphane De May (CrL), Françoise Regnard (ARTS2), Michel Stockhem (ARTS2), Arnold Marinissen, Janneke van der Wijk (Conservatorium van Amsterdam), Juul Diteweg (ArtEz), Mark Vondenhoff, Jantien Westerveld (Prince Claus Conservatoire), Sigrid Paans, Jan Rademakers (Conservatorium Maastricht), Frans Koevoets, Okke Westdorp (Codarts Rotterdam), Ruth Fraser, Martin Prchal, Eleonoor Tchernoff, Henk van der Meulen (Royal Conservatoire), Raf De Keninck, Martyn Smits (Fontys Conservatory), Jos Schillings, Hannie van Veldhoven (HKU Utrechts Conservatorium).

After welcoming the participants, the chair asks for a short reflection on the congress so far. The choice for more breakout sessions and less keynotes is welcomed as a positive evolution. Participants plead for even more active engagement of students, not only the 'crème de la crème', but preferably also the 'average' student. At the same time the participants are aware this would imply more funding and more active preparations by their home institutions, which is acknowledged as a limiting factor. Perhaps working with video messages could be a solution?

The current number of breakout sessions is perceived as a limit as well, if you want to ensure people can participate in all sessions they are interested in. Institutions come with more and more participants, which lead to more diverse target audiences, with specific interests (students, teachers, managers...). Ensuring the Quality of each of the breakout sessions gets more difficult for the Council, hence the importance of the evaluation forms. The Keynotes have been carefully prepared, for the breakout sessions the Council needs to rely more on the different coordinators. The participants suggest working by general formal guidelines and a more defined role for the moderators, in order to avoid redundancies and 'platitudes', based on the model of a seminar.

Participants express their wish to continue the debates after the congress as well, through an online network. The app certainly offers some possibilities, but has also some privacy issues.

Participants also express the wish to avoid platitudes about the importance of music or the greatness of Bach...

The chair asks which services the participants would like to see developed. The suggestion to develop a web page enabling users to search through a centralized portal into the conservatoire libraries is received with lots of skepticism. Other organizations (like lamic) have tried this before, and failed. This doesn't look like a priority for AEC, due to its lack of resources. Participants suggest investing in better ways to teach students how to use the existing tools as a better alternative. The proposition to invest in the current pilot project to facilitate staff and student mobility is met with more enthusiasm. Difficulty remains how to connect the different institution's student database systems with this new mobility application.

Towards the question "Which services are missing?" participants suggest developing a portal of all member institutions with info about their programs and teachers.

The chair asks some help from a Walloon and a Flemish representative to assist in updating the National Profiles, dating back from 2000. Janneke van der Wijk, Stéphane De May and Peter Swinnen volunteer.

Before bringing this meeting to a close, Peter Swinnen mentions the new Honda Competition for Classical Music, a competition between the 8 Belgian HEI's. Stéphane De May announces a new project with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Liège.

Italy

Council Member: Claire Mera-Nelson (assisted by Sara Primiterra)

The discussions at the Italian regional meeting focused exclusively on the question of the representation of Italy on the AEC Council. At the beginning of the meeting colleagues were referred to the summary of the new Council election process proposal. It was noted that it would take time to come to fruition, but eventually a more even balance would be reached because the numbers of Italian members mean that over time undoubtedly Italy will be represented. In the

meantime, Lucia di Cecca is a candidate for election to Council and, as a temporary arrangement agreed with the Italian Conference of Rectors, Alessandro Melchiorre has been co-opted to the AEC Council. It was hoped that the group were content with this solution, however discussions soon suggested that the group was not content with the proposal in its current form.

Questions were asked by participants as to why, when there were two proposals made to the AEC Council about alternative voting arrangements, only one was being taken forward? Likewise, some members wanted to understand why the Italian Conference of Directors expressed desire that Prof Melchiorre should become the permanent representative was not being honoured? Sara Primiterra & Claire Mera-Nelson sought to clarify the position of the AEC Council.

A member explained and clarified the past experience which had led to the current debate within the Conference of Directors, within the AEC Council and between the two groups.

Members present noted that they were pleased to have the opportunity to speak frankly and openly the issue, as they were not all fully aware of the situation including the letters exchanged between AEC and the Italian Conference of Directors, and were only able to hear about it through the regional meetings at AEC.

It was suggested that the Italian Conference would have formally proposed Prof Melchiorre as the Italian delegate for the 2016 Council elections if they had received Stefan Gies' response to their question earlier, but as the AEC response only arrived in October it was too late to allow Prof Melchiorre to be proposed to AEC through the normal formal process. Some colleagues felt that the wishes of the Italian Conference should be respected, and Lucia di Cecca's candidacy should not go ahead.

Lucia clarified her position, which is that Paolo Troncon asked all Italian conservatoires to submit nominations for AEC Italian representative: Lucia di Cecca was only person to put herself forward and thus was nominated. Dialogue had taken place between Meuchi, who is now (following Troncon) Chair of the Italian Conference of Directors and other parties, suggesting that Lucia di Cecca might stand down in favour of supporting the candidature of Prof Melchiorre. However, Lucia di Cecca had decided to go ahead.

There was considerable specific reflection on the proposal to be debated at the General Assembly about changes to the voting arrangements proposal. Several colleagues expressed concerns about this proposal, and indicated that they would not support it.

Hungary, Romania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Macedonia, Kosovo, Albania, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, Montenegro, Serbia
Council Member: Georg Schulz

Attending:

- Bosnia and Herzegovina: Sanda Dodik, Vanesa Kremenovic (both Banja Luka), Maja Ackar Zlatarevic, Senad Kazic (both Sarajevo)
- Croatia: Bashkim Shehu (Pula), Dalibor Cikojevic, Mladen Janjanin, Marina Novak (all Zagreb)
- Czech Republic: Richard Fajnor, Jindrich Petras (both Brno)
- Hungary: Gyula Fekete (Budapest)
- Romania: Diana Asinefta Mos (Bukarest)
- Serbia: Milan Miladinovic (Novi Sad)

The group welcomes new members, especially Senad Kazic and Diana Mos, who have become head of their institutions recently. During the round table of introductions Bashkim from Pula introduces his project. City of Pazin has offered to him a castle and some additional buildings for administration. This could be part of Pula academy if a use for international teaching will be found. In a previous discussion at the congress Georg could explain to Bashkim that AEC itself cannot run or take the patronage over such a project. But AEC is happy to bring members together or to join an ERASMUS+ application as a partner for dissemination and evaluation. Many attending

representatives express their principal interest, but the financial framework must be more concrete. Bashkin promises to deliver more explicit information to the group. After that cooperation can be discussed in depth.

We went through the report from the meeting in 2015 that was printed in the reader on p.106. There are no topics unanswered, EUphony Youth Orchestra will have a next project in February/March 2017 with members of the group attending. Zagreb reports on their experience with U-Multirank. They are used (as many of the members of the group) to provide figures for different occasions so the exercise did not bring too much additional work. The outcome is considered as interesting. Brno reports on an EFQM exercise. Hope is expressed that indicators formulated by AEC for U-Multirank could inform local systems as well to make them more applicable for music.

A positive assessment of the congress so far was expressed. Nevertheless there were ideas for improvement. First the topics of the brainstorming-session should be shared some days before the congress. It was considered as difficult to make a decision where to go on the spot. Sometimes more than two parallel sessions are interesting. With a simple video-documentation that is available on the AEC-webpage afterwards it would be possible to be informed about the others as well. More students' involvement is desirable. This could be students' opinion on topics in form of short video clips or more students' reporting on what they have heard during the congress. A webpage area for matchmaking is considered as highly desirable. Although some scores are in the www, this will not replace work in a library on scores. What is really needed are scores, instruments, books, and records. There is a strong need for performance-material for orchestra and opera. This webpage should be as simple as possible. Institutions post what they have to offer and other institutions will report what they want. IAML could be addressed through their outreach committee for help.

Richard reports on their interest for EASY.

Concerning the National Overviews members of the group provide contact data of persons to address. These were sent to AEC office by Georg. Diana will make sure that the contact person in Romania will still be available or inform AEC about a different person.

Portugal, Spain

Council Member: Ingeborg Radok-Žádná (assisted by Nerea López de Vicuna)

Introduction:

Ingeborg Radok-Zadna presents herself. Ingeborg was elected as new Council member during the 2015 General Assembly in Glasgow. Ingeborg is Vice-Dean for International Relations and Art Activity at the Prague Academy of Performing Arts, Music and Dance Faculty. Due to the current lack of Spanish or Portuguese representatives in the Council, Ingeborg has been appointed to represent the Spanish and Portuguese colleagues.

Proposal for new rules for Council elections:

Many of the colleagues had not heard before about the proposal for new election rules. A "step by step" approach would have been more appropriate. The current Congress would have been a good opportunity to start the discussion with the members, in order to agree in the suitable proposals to put forward during the next GA (2017).

Eirik Birkeland explains that the new proposal seeks to ensure a more balanced regional geographic representation at Council. However, if the members believe that it is too early to make such a decision they should say it during the General Assembly.

Update of the "National Overviews":

Ingeborg explains that the AEC office is currently updating the AEC Handbook on National Music Education Systems, which was firstly published in 2010. The overview includes the descriptions of National Systems for Music in Higher Education, pre-college music education, instrumental/vocal teacher training and training of music teachers in general. One contact person has been appointed

per country, and AEC is aiming at having the updated publication online in the AEC website by January 2017.

This publication could be a helpful tool for advocacy for the Spanish case. It would be very helpful to have the updated legal status of the Music Higher Education sector in all European countries (institutions, level of education of teachers, recognition of degrees...). This handbook could be used as a tool for lobbying for the Spanish case at EU level.

Matchmaking of resources between institutions:

The AEC is thinking of developing a webpage area for institution's libraries to ensure a matchmaking of resources between institutions, jointly offered with the International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres (IAML).

The Spanish and Portuguese colleagues unanimously agree that it would be a great idea, and that their institutions could make a good use of it.

European online Application System (EASY)

AEC conducts a pilot project to develop a European online Application System (EASY) to facilitate staff and student mobility. This could develop towards a European music specific campus management system.

It is agreed that this is a great project, a real "dream" for any International Relations Coordinator. Some of the Spanish and Portuguese institutions are already part of the pilot project which is taking place right now with the participation of over 50 AEC member institutions. If any of the institutions present is still interested in joining the pilot they are still on time.

Membership fees

Last year, during the regional meeting, some Spanish colleagues remarked that the annual membership fee is too high for many Spanish institutions, but the fees are still at the same level this year. The Council is asked to reflect on the fee categories.

Lack of involvement in AEC projects and activities

Every year there are fewer representatives from Spain and Portugal in the AEC Congress. On one hand, some members have withdrawn due to financial issues. On the other hand, many members feel too busy with their "daily-life" obstacles and challenges in their home institutions.

Bruno Pereira, Chair of the IRC WG, Ángela Domínguez, AEC Project and Communications Manager and Nerea López de Vicuna, AEC Office Manager, encourage the Spanish and Portuguese members to get more involved in the AEC activities and projects. Being an AEC member entitles many benefits that some of the members might not even be aware of. For instance, the AEC is a very helpful platform for dissemination (AEC website and Social Media). Members are animated to send their information to the office staff. On the other hand, the AEC regularly launches open calls for members to become part of the WGs. The AEC is highly interested in having more Southern and Eastern European representatives in these groups. There are 2 Spanish colleagues in the AEC office and they will be very happy to help the members in any way.

How could AEC help?

AEC could help by lobbying for the harmonization or adaptation of Higher Education Degrees to a University level. A long discussion is held regarding the current situation in Spain; It is reported that Stefan Gies, AEC CEO, will be in San Sebastián (Musikene) from 24th to 26th November at the Spanish Congress of HME institutions, organized by the SEM-EE (Society for Music Education in Spanish State). Stefan is particularly interested in becoming more involved of the national realities, and will be very happy to discuss with the Spanish members what AEC could do for the Spanish case.

Future regional meetings

One of the colleagues suggests mixing countries for future regional meetings, so colleagues from different parts of Europe could discuss together.

France, Luxembourg

Council Member: Jacques Moreau

Participants (in order of the Congress participants list):

- Laurent Gignoux, Sylvain Perret, *Bordeaux (PESMD Bordeaux Aquitaine)*
- Chantal Charlier, *Dammay-les-Lys (CMDL)*
- Bernard Descôtes, *Dijon (ESM Bourgogne Franche Comté)*
- Valérie Girbal, *Lille (ESMD Nord de France)*
- Jacques Moreau, *Lyon (Cefedem)*
- Géry Moutier, Isabelle Replumaz, Sylvain Devaux, *Lyon (CNSMD)*
- Benoît Baumgartner, *Nantes-Rennes (Le Pont Supérieur)*
- Jean-Paul Alimi, *Nice (CNRR)*
- Gretchen Amussen, *Paris (CNSMD)*
- Emmanuelle Desouches, Roser Graell Calull, *Paris (PSPBB)*
- Claire Michon, *Poitiers-Tours (CESMD Poitou Charentes)*
- Jean-Luc Tourret, *Rueil Malmaison (CRR)*
- Anne Guyonnet, Aline Zylberajch, *Strasbourg (HEAR)*

In all, 18 participants representing all the French institutions attended the Congress. No Luxembourg institutions attended the Congress.

Information on the events since the last Congress

AEC and Council activities

- U-Multirank: the test was made during the year to check the criteria and the questionnaire proposed by U-Multirank ;
- MusiQue: now registered on EQAR. It is now possible to request a MusiQue participation to the French accreditation process for higher music education. That was presented to the ministry on several occasions, but it is still necessary to come back again on that point;
- Artist Patrons: the Council decided to have figures able to carry and advocate for the image of the AEC;
- Full Score: real involvement of students, they have their own group and they participate to the other working groups;
- Meeting with ELIA: in Amsterdam, on september 16th, joint to a Council meeting. Common concerns:
 - Artistic Research,
 - Interdisciplinary,
 - Arts and refugees.

Collaboration on those themes is foreseen for the ELIA annual Congress in Amsterdam next year.

Both CEOs are meeting in some crossed working groups.

Each organization will advertise on the link between their networks.

Activities concerning the French group

- The meeting in May with two representatives of the French Erasmus office, in Lyon: many specific points were addressed;

- Stefan Gies at the ANESCAS GA in Metz, in August;
- The national overview: a consultation on the revised draft was made, some feedback was sent. The only section left to finish is the section about music education at school.

U-Multirank.

CNSMDL was part of the test panel of institutions. An important translating work was made. Many students answered the questionnaire. They found it easy to answer. The questionnaire presents clear questions, doesn't concern people, but organization, the adequacy between the students' need and the program offered, for the education part; detailed activities within the section concerning the social activities of the institution. Criteria are well defined and provide good indicators. The questionnaire is anonymous within the institution.

The questionnaire is quite long but intuitive and easy to respond to, fluidly with no tricky questions. The process is always well explained.

It takes into account the size of the institution, which is very positive. It concerns: the program, students' life, but not the staff. It is a self-development tool for the institution internal review process.

Also tool for benchmarking: it offers visibility and opportunities to promote the institutional information abroad, international tool for students which allow them to better analyse some specific aspect of institutions and make a choice. But that needs a change in mentalities.

A worry is for the ranking possibility. But some people feel that it is inevitable and will happen: will it then be possible to have a control on the results? What is said is that each institution will keep the choice of participating or not to the system, or to withdraw.

The institutions' reputation is at stake. If an institutional size criterion were to be considered, it would be really difficult for some institutions. Everyone needs legible references. The aspect of the COMUE (*clusters of universities in France*) linked to the Shanghai ranking leads to a unified model which would not help support for singularized and strongly identified institutions.

For the national situation, it could offer an opportunity to defend our need for financial support from the government to meet the European facilities and pedagogical standards. That can be the role of ANESCAS (*French association of directors of higher performing arts education institutions*).

The election process

Eirik Birkeland attended the meeting at that moment. He presented some reasons for that proposition: the Northern countries are overrepresented in the Council. That cannot last longer. The proposed version means a complete change, but maybe it is too early as it concerns membership, fees, institutional relation to the AEC. It should be needed to go further in the reflection. He recommends to carefully read the proposition in order to be able to debate during the GA.

Discussion

The proposal starts from a virtuous thought and responds to a logic to a better geographical distribution of the representatives. Some different concerns are mentioned: the composition of the regions may change, some countries are able to be displaced from a region to another one; new relationships, balance of forces, are potentially to come out of the proposition and may present a risk of division, influence strategies in decision-making: autonomy of defined regions? sub-council? A loss of confidence in the governance of the AEC would then appear.

Things can certainly evolve, but attendants are attached to the possibility for all members to vote for any candidate, deciding both for geographical reasons and the personal qualities of the candidates.

Feedback on the Congress

Positive points

- A general feeling of great satisfaction;
- Quality of contents, subjects, among the best of all congresses: subjects deeply involved, that all stayed connected to the theme of the Congress;
- The amount parallel sessions, which offered, and allowed to assist to, many subjects; a real time was included for discussion and participants were able to be active in the discussion, being though less passive and really involved into the heart of the subject;
- Sessions outlined: the opening brainstorming session, really appreciated; the session about refugees, among others;
- Some risk taking (on the subjects, the organization);
- The word given to the students.

More critical observations

- The schedule was too tight, not offering enough space to go from one session to the following one, generating delays and shortened sessions (general opinion);
- The efficiency sought for the organisation - close to business - does not necessarily offer possibility, when treating a subject, to question the evidences and the modes of thought, to foster a more critical reflection; there is a need for contributions in sociology and history (one opinion);
- There is a need for more teachers - those are "on the field" - as participants, but that is also a matter of finances;
- The language: participants from latin countries don't easily catch the dominant English expression and way of thinking.

Other remarks

- If contradictory elements or conversations were to be addressed, it should be done by preparatory sessions;
- There is a difficulty, within institutions, to translate for staff how the Congress and the platforms operate and work;

Platforms are interesting and possible, but there are financial difficulties for their implementation.