

EUASA: Second Annual Board Meeting

Minutes from Monday Dec 14th, 2020, 3pm CET

The following countries were represented:

Czech Republic AAUP CZ: Thea Favloro

Swiss AUCS: Clementina Acedo & Mark Barneche

Spain APUNE: Ignacio Messana & Monica Perez-Bedmar

Italy AACUPI: Pia Schneider

Ireland ASAPI: Stephen Robinson

France APUAF: Loren Ringer

Germany AASAPeV: Kurt Gamerschlag

Meeting begins: Welcome and overview of the agenda by Pia

Association news per country:

AACUPI Italy: Pia reports that the president, Portia Prebys has suspended the membership to EUASA, but members have not voted on the matter as quorum wasn't reached in the October meeting and the matter was not mentioned in the December meeting. For the time being, we understand that Portia Prebys, Fabrizio Ricciardelli & Gianfranco Borio do not want to participate in any activity with EUASA.

The association has 150 members, but there is little information about which programs are still operating or which have closed.

Furlough continues until the end of March sponsored by Italian government. Programs have to pay 18% taxes in addition to unemployment since the not-for-profit programs can't prove a loss of income, only a loss of students.

Shutdown: from Dec 21st until Jan 6, people can't move between regions, anyone coming from abroad has to quarantine.

AAUP CZ Republic: Thea (Kim joins later) reports that at this moment people are not sure what's going to happen in the short term in terms of further restrictions, and the government is developing an elaborate system of what is open and closed. We hope to know more in the next couple of days.

Spring 2021 semester: some programs hope to have students but very few. NYU Prague has 1 student who may stay through Spring. Pretty much all programs hope to open for summer and fall 2021.

ASAPI Ireland: Stephen reports that the Association's activity through the pandemic, has been mainly program surveys, information sharing and some virtual social activities. Travel in and out of Ireland was never banned as we are not a part of Schengen. We were allowed to bring students in if they could prove the ability to quarantine for 2 weeks. Ireland in mid-December is at the end of 6 weeks of strict restrictions, and for now Ireland has the lowest Covid-19 rates in Europe.

ASAPI will make membership fees optional for next year.

There are about 150 US study abroad students in Ireland but almost exclusively direct enroll at Irish institutions. Less than 5 to 10 percent of usual numbers of students are coming to Ireland usually 6000 per semester and now just about 150. Anecdotal information suggests that many left in October to go home during the new lockdown.

Several institutions, mainly third-party providers conducted virtual internships. There seems to have been mixed success, most programs had low enrolment but one particular institution did well with this.

Primarily 3rd-party providers and some programs have shut, we don't know if they will reopen again. Job losses have gotten much worse; more institutions pulling out of Ireland.

AASAPe.V. Germany:

Kurt reported the country is entering a very strict lockdown as of tomorrow until mid-January but most likely mid-February. At this moment programs are more or less in the middle of semester and virtually no study abroad US students in the programs; the rumor is that a few 100 students enrolled directly in German universities. A few thousand American students left in Germany.

APUNE Spain: Ignacio (Monica joins later).

Ignacio reports the situation is very similar in Spain. One week we're worried, then the next week our country (or another) is winning. We need to support each other in every country. 90% cancelled over summer and a few programs open in Fall and that is going well. Spring: out of 90 programs, between 10 and 20 that will have a program. A few programs announced they will close definitively. Programs do not have to pay the APUNE fee but almost all of them did. APUNE opened the possibility of single person to join the association (for RDs that lost their job)

If we can, we plan to maintain our yearly meeting (including public Spanish Universities) even if only in a virtual format in Feb – March.

APUAF France: Loren reports that 60% of spring programs are cancelled, another 13% undecided. Thus 27% are still open for Spring. APUAF was quite active; for instance, a committee produced the Covid Info sheets re Government rules as well as the Protocols for Housing and for Host families. APUAF is willing to share the protocols with other

associations. Colleagues are very active and there is lots of solidarity. Members meet for coffee virtually.

People taking advantage of webinars and professional development, some of which is financed by the French govt.

Only a few small programs closed, but mostly will continue.

Furlough is extended through the summer; the employer has to pay 70% of the salary and the employee gets 82% of the original salary. APUIAF reduced annual fees to 50€.

AAECG Greece:

Alexis explains that AAECG had a 10% increase in the last open doors report but only amounts to 5000 SA students in GR. Very few programs – only 9 members and non-profit with either Greek universities and SA programs like CYA. Private Greek universities do not have students, but they have Greek students which makes up for it.

CYA has 9 students, who are very highly dedicated students in classical studies.

Field studies took place in the 1st part of semester which is good because there is a lockdown now. Crazy summer season with lots of tourists and parties – this is why numbers increased. Since Nov 1: very strict lockdown; students work from home but are living close to the academic center.

Near future: we expect 35 students coming in spring plus another group of 50 students in March. No layoffs so far; the government has been helpful with furlough for staff, but faculty is paid by course; we have asked faculty to do research and produce a value-added product for the Center.

AUCS Switzerland:

Clementina reports that Covid-19 numbers in Switzerland are the worst of all of Europe. Federal government is intervening if the (German) Cantons don't apply sufficient restrictions. Canton of Geneva has been in lockdown since Nov 2; courses at Swiss universities are all online.

There are no study abroad students, but degree seeking students are present. Hybrid classes in the fall for some programs.

Association has met a few times which was helpful, we supported and learned from each other. Very difficult times: the Swiss programs are very small, and some might not survive; fighting for partial unemployment is one example of the challenge.

Mark adds:

The Association put money into the legal counsel to try and get the partial unemployment for one program that has been operating since 1947.

Not successful so far, but home campus may try again. Most of us try to hang on.

Everyone hinging their hopes on Summer. If summer doesn't run, it will be difficult for programs to stay open.

Legal, financial and organizational matters:

Pia opens discussion and reminds everyone that bylaws must be approved to change to 2 virtual meetings per year.

APUNE is considering changing status of membership, from associate to active member (EUASA offers 3 types of membership: 1. active or 2. associate for associations or 3. honorary membership for single persons.

Pia reports on the successful collaboration with the Forum and the community chats EUASA offered in Fall 2020. Sponsorships were given and other forms of support for scholarships could be given in the future.

Thanks to the Zoom conferences and meetings a much broader community was created and EUASA will find more people to invest their time serving the pan-European association.

Ignacio (APUNE) responds to membership status: I will speak to all members about the community chats and presence at the Forum and then propose a full membership. Spain sees that EUASA has done a great job with the Forum; would like to know what EUASA 2.0 will look like.

We are at a crossroads for SA and EUASA. We worry that AACUPI has a different vision of the future than what EUASA, under Pia's leadership represents in this moment. APUNE members may ask why should we become a full member if Italy is no longer a member?

APUNE is interested though in continuing to learn more about legal aspects of European Union.

Pia replies that AACUPI's position is very confusing; first there was no motivation for the suspension given, then a list of goals was published in the minutes which was never given to her as an agenda: (she quotes)

Tangible goals for such association were fiscal relief for US study abroad programs within Europe in the form of VAT reductions or exemptions as non- profits; access to EU funds for research, academic projects and the like; uniform legal frameworks for internships linked to a study abroad program in the EU; harmonized labor/tax rules for US faculty seconded to the EU; standardized student visas/mobility in the EU for students in our study abroad programs within the Schengen Agreement, among others.

Members agree that these expectations are unrealistic, goals impossible to reach and certainly not within three years.

Pia says future goals, short and long term should be defined again and raises the question of how to divide the volunteer work which was carried only by a few.

Stephen responds in presenting the 5 potential committees for the future EUASA:

- Website/LinkedIn (PR presence) group

- Political group
- Research group
- Outreach, community building group
- Events group (workshops, conferences, presentations)

Clementina the AACUPI list is way too ambitious and not sure if a not-for-profit association can achieve this. Lobbying with ministries or in Brussels is important, but goals cannot be reached overnight. The research (RD survey) and the work done with the Forum is remarkable.

Mark: the value of EUASA is being questioned by some members and whether or not AUCS should stay in EUASA. How important are the European (political) goals for CH? AUCS would not share the goal to lobby Brussels, for example. AUCS had ambitious goals as well but had to adapt (example standardized internships) and found that our real value lies in supporting and learning from each other in a crisis, exchanging ideas and collaborating at events, such as with the Forum. Thus, the framework of cooperation is already given and is basically to speak from one unified voice!

Loren: If we adopt the 5 groups Stephen proposed, indeed the political aspect is only one that does not apply to CH while the others are pertinent to Switzerland and the UK. Preoccupied with Brexit, the UK did not join EUASA; however, they continue to express interest and several people from the UK participated in the community meetings.

Ignacio: If the only goal is related to EU politics, that would be difficult (for APUNE), I appreciate the other 4 goals as a program for the future for EUASA 2.0. I would propose a different structure where each country has *two representatives*; it lightens the workload and it is so much easier to do now by meeting and collaborating virtually.

Alexis: Pia, Stephen and Loren have done a great job keeping the association together.

The 5-points Stephen presented are great – they all feed on each other. Even politics, lobbying and outreach can go together and we all know that politics depend on surveys.

When Greece joined because I convinced the AAECG members to do it, this was done specifically because of EU politics. There is something to be said about our failure to move forward with the EU and politics; we know this is difficult because the EU is a big beast, and doesn't move easily. But I'm concerned about legal counsel and the need to have guidance.

We need to do the utmost to bring ACCUPI back to the fold.

Kurt: Even in national associations, a lot of people are hesitant to volunteer. We need to find competent people to form this group, in particular for the group "politics".

For legal, we also need outside help. Could we have a "2nd GF" from another country? Could other lawyers donate their time?

Stephen: points out that our community chats were very well regarded and that it has generated enthusiasm and people to volunteer.

Maybe each association should propose 3 or 4 people for each committee.

Monica: We should define a bit better the 5 groups and send out a short description.

Approval of Bylaws:

Pia: I'll send you the revised bylaws as proposed and approved in the July 2020 meeting for your records.

Financial account:

Loren: will share the budget by email with the minutes.

To summarize, the expenses were for banking fees (66, 59€), for the website, the visit to Brussels, partnering with Forum, the Zoom room ... which sums up to a total 2088, 90€ for expenses. Currently we have 6339,90€ in the EUASA bank account.

We have to be careful with expenses especially if we want to implement some projects or go again to Brussels. We may consider sponsorships or to raise the annual fees in the future from 400 to 500€ but this would of course be voted on in a future board meeting.

ELECTIONS of the Chair and Deputy Chair:

Proposed candidates are Stephen for Chair and Clementina as Deputy Chair.

Treasurer-Secretary: Loren will continue his role

All members voted unanimously for Stephen and Clementina per email during the

10-Minute Break

VARIOUS

Pia resumes confirming the election of Stephen as Chair and Clementina as Deputy Chair.

She mentions that the Zoom space can be used by everyone/working groups and reminds all to use the logo so that we are well-known/ keep our visibility and association identity alive.

Stephen reports on community chats:

- The EUASA event on Sept 24th was a big event with 70 people attending.
- The 4 community chats ranged from 22 to 39 people present.
- Critical Dialogue on Nov 11th, "All Voices at the Table." 33 attendees were hosted by Pia, Loren, Stephen and Lee l'Hote. The offshoot of the meeting will be in the form of an article; team of 8 people to write an opinion piece to come out after holidays.

Pia presents the EUASA session at the Forum European conference in October hosted by Hannah from ASAPI, Monica from APUNE and Alexis from AAECG. Well-attended and good evaluations.

She adds that EUASA's relationship is excellent and FORUM and EUASA have now signed reciprocal membership.

She adds that overall, EUASA can be proud of what has been achieved in less than 4 years in creating EUASA's as a legal entity and in building up a community: "We are a team now and have solid foundations".

Loren expresses his appreciation for the collaboration with other EUASA members in all the community chats and conferences. Members attended each other's GA (Loren and Pia joined the APUNE meeting and Pia attended the APUAF meeting) which was a good experience. What we take back from the meetings: we are not in this alone and everyone is contributing in its own way to SA in Europe ... and we learned to build teams and work closer together.

Pia: indeed, we can learn a lot from the various models of how the national associations work and organize themselves, thus let's continue to invite each other whenever possible.

Stephen thanks Pia for her leadership and dedication to EUASA.

5.30pm Meeting ends