

Minutes
European Regional Assembly
24-25 October 2015

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Welcome and introductions

The session began with a roll call and an introduction of both voting participants and participants from movements and guests. This was followed with a brief description of the quorum required for the meeting; Nine votes from affiliated movements out of the total - eighteen affiliated movements in order to be able to carry out valid voting. Most votes throughout the Assembly are to be counted on coloured voting cards: green -approve, red - not approve, yellow- abstain. ERC elections are an exception, they are to be conducted by secret ballot.

Roll Call

Affiliated movements in attendance: Lennart Nolden, Mirjam Meindl (Austria, two voting cards), Ivan Kuks (Belarus, one voting card), Adam Smith (UK, one voting card), Krista Autio (Finland / SKY, one voting card), Salma Charaf (France, one voting card), Yulia Bajelidze (Georgia, one voting card), Stefanie Tara, Miriam Schubert (Germany, two voting cards), Marian Mangaoang, Eimhin Walsh (Ireland, two voting cards), Clare Wilkins (representing Italy, one voting card), Magnus Ahlquist, Linn Asplund (Sweden, one voting card), Zuzana Babicova (Slovakia, one voting card). 15 votes.

Other movements in attendance: Shoghakat Muradyan (Armenia), Anita Dimitrova, Zoran Mamuchevski (Bulgaria)

Not in attendance: Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland OOL, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland

ERC in attendance: Zuzana Babicova (Chairperson, no vote), Maria Kozhinova (Links Coordinator), David Cleary (Fundraising Coordinator), Annika Foltin (ExCo), Krista Autio (Campaigns Coordinator, no vote), Ellie Peacock (Events Coordinator). 4 votes from the ERC.

Guests: Natia Tsintsadze (Regional Secretary), Annette Klinke (SCM Germany, resources), Are Kaspersen (SCM Sweden, pastoral support), Ellis Tsang (SCM Britain, photographer), Loi Almeron (representing NA region) Nova Yolanda Putru (representing AP region), Luis Aranguiz (representing LAC region)

Total number of votes: 20 votes. 11 affiliated movements present, the quorum is achieved.

Approval of agenda

Agenda is read and explained by the Chairperson. See 2015 ERA agenda in the Annexes.

No questions, no request for changes from plenary.

Voting cards are distributed. Agenda was unanimously approved.

Safe space guidelines and voting procedures

Full guidelines were included in attendees' packs, but the Chair (Zuzana Babicova) highlighted particularly two areas:

- The level of English varies among participants, so clear speech and active listening should be used at all times.
- Coloured voting cards must remain in the meeting room at all times so that vote counters can easily identify the number of participants present in the room.

No questions from the plenary.

SCM status changes

SCM Armenia wished to change status from that of contact movement to associated movement, which must occur at an ERA. Shoghakat Muradyan summarised the activities that they participate in and the Chair emphasised the amount of participation that the movement already does at the European level. The floor was then opened to questions:

Question: As the SCM in Armenia does not have a budget, can they forego the fee to WSCF Global that is requested of all associated and affiliated movements?

The Chair suggested that SCM Armenia discuss this with the global office as this fee does not go to WSCF-E.

Question: Is SCM Armenia an ecumenical SCM?

They are trying to organise ecumenical events.

Vote to convert SCM Armenia's status from contact to associated: 16 for, 3 abstentions, 0 against (19 total). Motion passed. SCM Armenia is now an associated member.

ERC Reporting

Events Report

The report is narrated by the Chairperson, with individual events presented by ERC members.

- Events held during the reporting period fall into three main categories: capacity building, educational and Board/ERC meetings.

- Capacity Building: Staff and Officers' Meetings (Skopje 2014, Madrid 2015) and training for ERC members. These were described by the ERC Links Coordinator (Maria Kozhinova).
- Educational Events: Conferences in Wrocław and Litomyšl. These were described by the ERC events coordinators (Annika Foltin and Ellie Peacock).
- Board/ERC Meetings: ERC meet twice per year (Berlin Jan 2014, Bratislava July 2014, Paris Jan 2015, Stockholm Jun 2015) to discuss operational matters and meet local SCMs. Capacity-building training sessions for the new ERC were held on both ERC meetings of 2014 by trainer Francois David Freschi. Locations for these meetings are decided based on locations WSCF-E has not recently visited.

Mozaik

The annual Mozaik journal falls under events due to its similarity with the project nature of event organisation. Mozaik involves four paid individuals working with a larger team of volunteers: funding for this is from the EYF (European Youth Foundation). Five hundred copies of each edition are printed.

Cost of events plus Mozaik totals €64.486 (estimated) for the reporting period.

The floor is open to questions.

Question: There are two more events outlined in the written report 2014 but not presented here; why is this?

These two events are sub regional events organised locally rather than by WSCF-E. They are included in the written report to fully represent the range of activity in the region, but the funds were raised locally for that reason WSCF-E does not claim organisational ownership of these projects.

Events support initiatives

Events support comes under two main categories, external comms and social media.

- The WSCF-E website has had more than 30.000 unique visitors; most of these are located around Europe but there are also visitors from other regions.
- The Facebook page has increased in followers from 753 to 1161 in the past 2 years, 2013-2015. Maria Kozhinova (shortly to become part time Communications Officer) shared a vision of this page reflecting the members across the region.
- The newsletter promotes both European and global events and SCMs to readers. This is to be rejuvenated as part of Maria's new role.

- WSCF-Europe also has Flickr and YouTube channels
- WSCF-E now has a LinkedIn page.

Miscellaneous events

There have been a number of other miscellaneous events in the life of WSCF-E over the past two years:

- Flat owned in Budapest by WSCF-E was sold in Nov 14 for €40.000. The region's presence in Budapest is being dissolved subsequent to this sale. This is still on the agenda of WSCF-E for 2016.
- Gender conference due to be held in Oslo in Jan 15 was cancelled due to a lack of funds.
- WSCF Global General Assembly was held in Bogota, Colombia, in Spring 2015. This was moved from the original date of August 2014 due to the dire financial situation of the global movement. (for more details, consult the WSCF-E Annual Report 2014 and the GA report)
- WSCF-E office moved from Berlin to Trento in August 2015.

The floor is open to questions.

Question: Where did the money of the sold flat in Budapest go?

WSCF Europe got 52%, WSCF Global got 48%.

(Break, followed by roll call: attendees remained as above.)

Budget

The Chair and Regional Secretary (Natia Tsintsadze) outlined the current WSCF Global financial issues and the history surrounding this, including: the borrowing of money from the WCC (World Council of Churches), the Future of the Federation task group formation and outcomes, the Transition Team makeup and aims and a brief summary of the global Staff and Officers meeting in Birmingham (UK) in August 2015.

The Federation has been gathering information about the current situation and what events led to this. Only then can a way forward together be identified.

The Transition Team has been regularly reporting its progress and giving students across WSCF Global opportunities to feed into the work. The main questions they have been seeking to answer are around:

- Options for moving the global office;
- Changing the role of the General Secretary;

- Other creative routes forward for the Federation.

A more concrete report on the findings and recommendations of the Transition Team is to be taken to the ExCo for approval in December.

Personnel report

Chairperson gives report on personnel changes and HR structure for an overview. WSCF-E has three main groups of personnel: staff, ERC, and volunteers. The staff fall then into three subgroups: full time (regional secretary and intern(s)), part time (Budapest assistant), and project based (Mozaik editor and art editor).

There are also two major types of volunteer. These are events volunteers, who mostly tend to be students; and professional support volunteers, who are mostly Senior Friends.

The main changes to personnel which have either happened or are upcoming are as follows:

- There has been a new regional secretary. Natia Tsintsadze took on the role from Hans Hommens in October 2014.
- The intern role has now split to better focus in communications with a person skilled in this area, into two posts: one communications intern (Maria Kozhinova as of November 2015) and one office assistant (to be recruited).
- The part time Budapest assistant's post is due to be discontinued as WSCF-E ends its legal presence in Hungary.
- There have been a number of changes to ERC members as terms have ended or individuals have resigned. Highlighted was the male ExCo member: Valentin Tranchard was elected at the General Assembly but has since resigned at the end of September 2015 and therefore the ERA was tasked with appointing a new male ExCo member.

The floor is open to questions.

Question: What is the difference between the ExCo and the ERC?

The ExCo is the global decision making body and therefore the ExCo members on the ERC are primarily responsible for their ExCo role. This could include being on the personnel and/or finance committee of the ExCo.

Finance

The Chair explains sources of income of WSCF-Europe. WSCF-E has three major income streams, which can broadly be described as follows: WSCF Global for salary of the Regional Secretary and public funding- the EC (European Commission) for administration costs, and the

European Youth Foundation for event costs. The latter two has to be applied for annually according to priorities.

It takes a significant time of investment to apply for funding from EC and EYF but this is vital for the region in order to hold events and to try and ensure that no individuals are excluded based on a lack of financial means. In order to do the latter, Senior Friends are approached in order to raise the funds for international guests (particularly from other regions) to attend events. In recent years, less money has been forthcoming from Church-based organisations.

In the coming months, it will be considered how to use innovative methods to contribute to the core budget of WSCF global (from which WSCF-E receives regional secretary's salary). WSCF-Europe applied in September 2015 for a grant that could cover a part of Europe RS salary. In this way, it is hoped that the WSCF-Europe region will decrease dependency and our intake from the global budget.

After explanation of income sources and current financial situation, the Chair shows expenditure tables for 2014 and 2015.

The floor is open to questions.

Question: Could we have more detail on which EU programmes WSCF-E applies to for funding? And could national SCMs apply to these funds for their own or sub regional events?

The Youth in Action programme is the main area applied to. The Regional Secretary is currently looking at ways to support national SCMs in their fundraising goals, particularly in terms of joint applications for funding between the national SCM and WSCF-E.

Question: What is communication budget item, outside of publications?

This can involve more direct methods of communication including phone and internet, as well as the WSCF-E website.

Question: Why is the insurance line for 2015 blank?

The insurance is not payable until the end of the calendar year.

Question: Does WSCF-E have reserves?

Yes, around €17.000 from the region's share in the Budapest flat proceeds. The remaining amount has been paid to WSCF Global/Centennial Fund.

Question: The budget sheet currently shows a surplus, but with the region trying to reduce (or remove) its dependency on WSCF Global, it is interesting to note that removing the global contributions puts the region at a deficit. Is there anything being done to fix this?

Grant applications are in progress that would cover the Regional Secretary's salary for two years. This reduction of dependency is a new situation and project for WSCF-Europe that we are just starting with.

Question: The accounts show the money for the sale of the flat being received before the end of 2014, so this is shown as a surplus in this year which was not really the case. Did the Centennial Fund share of this go out early in 2015?

Yes, we shared the flat sale money in June 2015 as until then WSCF-E and CF was still in conversation about how to split costs incurred to WSCF-E for human resource costs related to the flat sale. The money to the CF was transferred thus a few months after WSCF-Europe received the overall flat sale money -back in 2014. Which is why the numbers look a little misleading. A note could be added to the 2014 numbers.

Strategic Plan for WSCF-E 2016-2017

There are a few main areas for the region to focus on in the coming months and years which are:

- organisational development into financial sustainability- identifying new channels of income to secure RS salary payment.
- Communications of WSCF-Europe- focus on external communications shall continue with the support of Communications Officer to improve the website presence, move Mozaik online, and work on the social media presence of WSCF-E.
- promoting and supporting interregional cooperation. We wish to continue strengthening our global community nature by inviting student members of our community from other regions to our activities happening in Europe.
- Thematic working groups, mirroring those that were decided at the General Assembly, it will give specific direction to the region's work and we will strive to continue in those working areas with our members.

Amendments to the WSCF-Europe By-Laws

The Chairperson explained that the session would involve looking at the proposed amendments together, then splitting them into smaller groups and to look in detail at any queries and finally to come together and vote on the amendments.

The by-laws state that any amendment can only be made with six weeks' notice before the ERA, but it was agreed by the Assembly that any small amendments to the proposed amendments could be considered within the meeting.

Roll call

Voting movements present: Austria (2), Britain (1), Finland SKY (1), France (1), Georgia (1), Germany (2), Italy (1), Ireland (2), Slovakia (1), Sweden (2). Total 14 votes.

Other movements in attendance: Armenia, Bulgaria

Voting members not present: Belarus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland OOI, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland

Other

ERC present: ExCo (1), EventsCord (2), Fundraising (1), Links (1). 5 votes.

ERC not voting / not present: Chair, Campaigns, Links

Total number of votes: 19 votes. 10 affiliated movements out of 18 present, quorum is achieved.

Explaining proposed amendments

The ERC Fundraising Coordinator (David Cleary) outlined the key changes proposed to the by-laws, which come under the following key areas:

- Duties and rights of movements (including associated movements' voting rights);
- How a movement terminates its membership;
- The addition of an ERC vice chair as a standalone position rather than an additional role;
- Other changes to coordinators' ERC roles;
- A reduction of quorum for meetings from half to two-thirds, reflecting the existence of dormant movements and the position of WSCF Global's General Assembly;
- The role of interest groups changing to that of working groups so that they can be used more;
- Explicit mention of associated and affiliated movements' required fee to the global federation;
- An appendix has been added to explain the aims of WSCF global and the possibility of including a co-opted member from a contact movement on the ERC.

Following a question on grammatical errors, the Assembly agreed that such small wording changes did not need to be voted in, provided that the sense of a sentence/clause was not altered by the change. A list of the small changes noted is found in Annex A.

The floor is opened to questions.

Question: Could the 1% of budget expected from movements be changed to ask for 1% of the previous year's expenditure?

This cannot be changed as the wording was agreed at the General Assembly. However, practically, each movement is encouraged to make an arrangement for payment with WSCF Global. WSCF-E's role here is an awareness raising and not enforcement.

Question: How much does the fee contribute towards the global movement's overall income?

Currently it is set at 1%. The regions are not hugely involved with collecting the fees; it is always coordinated at the global level.

Question: Would it not be better for movements to pay into the Europe region? Some movements are not connected well to the global level.

This does appear to be a valid point but as the Regional Secretary's salary comes from the global movement this should be made clear to these movements. In addition, the global movement is looking at building the connection with national movements.

In order to build the connections, it was suggested that the interim coordinator or another member of staff from the IRO could be invited to the Staff and Officers meeting in order that leaders from SCMs see a more obvious global connection.

The relationship between ExCo, ERA and ERC was clarified. The specifics on what the By-Law changes meant for multiple vote possibilities was clarified; an ERC member representing a movement would only get one vote at the ERA, but an individual representing two (or more) movements would get two (or more) votes.

Question: If there is a conflict between the values of an ERC member and their movement, could the wording in V.1.4.c mean that ERC members switch between their movement and ERC votes?

This is precisely why member movements should not rely on ERC members to represent them. It should be made clear to movements that the ERC role comes first, ahead of any individual SCM's affiliation.

Question: Should the reference to affiliated movements in Article V be expanded to include associated movements in addition?

This is just a practical rewording and does not prevent associated movements from voting; this just ensures that enough affiliated movements are represented.

Point for clarification: Does SCM Bulgaria (an associated movement) get one vote if these amendments are agreed?

Yes, they do.

Question: Why is the suggested quorum change so low as one third?

This is to solve the issue of some movements being inactive.

Rebuttal and proposition:

This is a short term fix to a problem which might disappear. In order to overcome this, a number of other solutions could be implemented, including requiring movements to at least respond (positively or negatively) to a request for membership fees within one year of being asked. The quorum could then be kept at one half of active movements for the ERA.

A discussion later followed on whether this constituted an amendment to an amendment: the suggestion would actually retain the status quo, so the Assembly agreed to vote on this amendment separately to the remaining changes to the by-laws.

Question: Could the vice-chair post be increased to four years alongside the chair? This would ensure consistency on the ERA.

Unfortunately this would constitute a further amendment so cannot be considered by the Assembly; however it might be a solution for the future if 2 years' term is considered a problem.

Voting

The Assembly voted to reject a quorum of one third of member movements for the ERA. This means that the status quo of one half is retained.

The Assembly voted to accept the remainder of the by-law amendments as one block. (For votes 17; Abstentions 0; Against votes 0.)

ERC elections

Roll Call

Voting movements present: Armenia (1), Austria (2), Belarus (1), Britain (1), Bulgaria (1), Finland SKY (1), Georgia (1), Germany (2), Italy (1), Ireland (2), Slovakia (1), Sweden (2). Total 16 votes.

Voting members not present: Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Finland OOI, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland

ERC present: ExCo (1), EventsCord (2), Fundraising (1). 4 votes.

ERC not voting / not present: Chair, Campaigns, Links

Total number of votes: 20 votes. 10 affiliated movements out of 18 present, quorum is achieved.

Explanation of voting procedures

The ERC elections will be conducted by secret voting. The candidates need to receive more than 50% of the overall voting in order to be elected.

Those positions which will not be filled at the ERA, shall be appointed by the ERC.

Co-opted member(s) will be elected by ERC (majority of the ERA is in favor of this).

Presentation of Candidates & vote after each Presentation:

- Rachel Power – Vice Chair (elected, 19 in favor – one vote missing)

Second Roll Call

A second roll call was requested, because now all delegates returned to the plenary room. Roll call is re-made with the following result:

Voting movements present: Armenia (1), Austria (2), Belarus (1), Britain (1), Bulgaria (1), Finland SKY (1), France (1), Georgia (1), Germany (2), Ireland (2), Slovakia (1), Sweden (2). Total 16 votes.

Voting members not present: Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland OOL, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland

ERC present: ExCo (1), EventsCoord (2), Fundraising (1), Links (1). 5 votes.

ERC not voting / not present: Chair, Campaigns

Total number of votes: 21 votes. 10 affiliated movements out of 18 present, quorum is achieved.

Presentations of ERC candidates continue

- Thematic Coordinator - single candidate Pawel Cecha (SCM Poland) - elected, 20 in favor, 1 abstention
- Global Links Coordinator - single candidate Krista Autio (SCM Finland SKY) - elected, 16 in favor, 2 abstention, 3 re-open nomination
- Male ExCo member - single candidate Ellis Tsang (SCM Britain), who runs for the position spontaneously, and thus does not have SCM endorsement. He is elected on the condition that SCM Britain gives their endorsement afterwards, 20 in favor, 1 abstention
- Capacity Building Coordinator – no one stands for this position (there is one application from Armenia without SCM endorsement - the ERC will consider it when endorsement comes)
- Fundraising Coordinator – no one stands for this position
- Regional Links Coordinator – single candidate Jurgita Kozeniauskaite (SCM Lithuania) - elected, 16 in favor, 2 re-open, 3 abstentions
- Treasurer – single candidate Clare Wilkins (SCM Britain) - elected, 18 in favor, 3 abstentions

The positions of Fundraising and Capacity Building Coordinators are still open, the plenary is encouraged to consider applying.

Policy papers 2015-2017

The group divided, in three sessions, into the following working groups to put together a policy paper of the thematic work of WSCF Europe for the next two years: Gender, Theology, Eco-Justice, Interfaith, Solidarity, Global Networking, Regional Communication and Fundraising. Groups worked throughout morning and afternoon to produce guiding documents for the future governance board.

Roll Call

Voting movements present: Austria (2), Belarus (1), Britain (1), Finland SKY (1), France (1), Georgia (1), Germany (2), Ireland (2), Slovakia (1), Sweden (2), Bulgaria (1), Armenia (1). Total 16 votes.

Voting members not present: Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland OOL, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland

ERC present: ExCo (1), Events (2), Fundraising (1), Links (1). 5 votes.

ERC not voting/not present: Campaigns, Chair

Total number of votes: 21 votes. 10 affiliated movements out of 18 present, quorum is achieved.

Presentation and voting on policy papers for 2015-2017

All working groups present their concept papers to the plenary. For details, see policy papers of respective working groups in Annexes.

The floor is opened to questions.

Question to Eco-Justice working group: How do you define 'eco-spirituality'?

The working group is working on the definition.

Policy papers are voted upon by the plenary with the following results:

- Gender (approved: 18 in favor, 3 abstentions)
- Interfaith (approved: 20 in favor, 1 abstention)
- Advocacy & Solidarity (approved: 21 in favor, unanimously)
- Eco Justice (approved: 18 in favor, 3 abstentions)

- Theology & Spirituality (approved: 20 in favor, 1 abstention)
- Regional Networking (approved: 19 in favor, 2 abstentions)
- Global Networking (approved: 21 in favor, unanimously)
- Fundraising (approved: 21 in favor, unanimously)

Question to the Chairperson: How binding are these papers?

These are the guiding policy papers for the elected ERC, we need to follow them as best as we can.

Other Business

Elections of Fundraising Coordinator

Adam Smith (SCM Britain) runs for the position spontaneously, but has no endorsement from his SCM yet.

He presents himself. The Chair suggests that since there is not yet an endorsement from the SCM, ERA will do a 'guiding vote' meaning that the ERC will appoint Fundraising Coordinator and it shall be done taking into consideration "guiding vote" results for Adam that the ERA shows. This will be done when the endorsement of SCM Britain comes.

Guiding Vote: 21 in favor (unanimously). ERC will now await the endorsement and advertise the position until then.

There is no other business presented to the European Regional Assembly

The meeting is adjourned

ANNEXES

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- [List of Delegates](#)
- [SCM Italy delegation of voting rights to Clare Wilkins](#)
- [2013-2015 ERC report](#)
- [ERC candidates](#)
- [Letters of endorsement for ERC candidates](#)
- [2015-2017 Policy Papers](#)