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# Report from the EMS Council Meeting, Berlin, 16–17 July 2016

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The EMS Council is our society's governing body and meets every two years, most recently in 2014 in Donostia/San Sebastián, Spain. When the year coincides with a European Congress of Mathematics (ECM), as happened this Summer, the council meeting traditionally immediately precedes the ECM. Thus, on 16–17 July 2016, 82 delegates gathered with 17 guests at Humboldt University in sunny Berlin, to hear reports, debate motions and hold elections, as well as to set the direction of our society for the coming years.

## Reports & Finance

After welcoming the delegates and guests, EMS President Pavel Exner briefly reported on his activities. The Secretary Sjoerd Verduyn Lunel then summarised the activities of the Executive Committee over the last two years (reports from all its meetings have appeared in in this newsletter). The Treasurer Mats Gyllenberg followed with an account of the society's finances, including auditor reports for 2014–15. Broadly speaking, the society's financial position is very healthy. The EMS Publishing House supports the EMS by providing the newsletter and the Mathematical Surveys at no cost to the society. With interest rates currently low, around half the society's financial resources are currently invested in a scheme with a 'medium' risk profile. Given this positive situation, the treasurer proposed to increase the budget for scientific activities and not to increase membership fees. The council approved the budget for 2017–18 and also appointed auditors.

## Membership

Discussion then turned to the topic of membership. The EMS currently has 2721 individual members (an increase from 2445 in 2014). After a presentation by the President of the Armenian Mathematical Union (AMU) Tigran Harutunyan, the council approved by acclamation the

application of the AMU to become a full member of the EMS. Four new institutional members have also joined: the Department of Mathematical Sciences at Aalborg University (Denmark), the Basque Center for Applied Mathematics (Bilbao, Spain), the University of Primorska's Faculty of Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Information Technologies (Koper, Slovenia) and the Department of Mathematics, Stockholm University (Stockholm, Sweden).

## By-laws

The council approved modifications to Rules 8 and 23 of the society's by-laws, along with a more significant change to Rule 30 on student membership, which now reads: "Anyone who is a student at the time of becoming an individual EMS member, whether PhD or in a more junior category, shall enjoy a three-year introductory period with membership fees waived. All the standard benefits will be granted during this time, except printed copies of the Newsletter."

## Elections to the Executive Council

The day-to-day running of the society is by its executive committee of ten members, all elected by the council. On this occasion, there were vacancies for two vice-presidents and five members-at-large. Two candidates for vice-president were proposed by the executive committee: Volker Mehrmann and Armen Sergeev (both currently members of the executive committee). Each gave a short presentation before leaving the room. Both were then elected unopposed by a show of hands. Volker Mehrmann will therefore serve as vice-president for the term 2017–2018 and Armen Sergeev will serve for the term 2017–2020.

The elections for members-at-large were more competitive, with 13 candidates contesting 5 positions. Each candidate delivered a short presentation and delegates

then voted in two rounds. The final result saw Nicola Fusco, Stefan Jackowski, Vincente Muñoz, Beatrice Pelloni and Betül Tanbay elected to the executive committee for the term 2017–2020. The president extended the society's sincere gratitude to all candidates who had put themselves forward.

### **ECMs 7 & 8**

One major decision to be taken by the council was the venue of the 8th ECM, to be held in 2020. Two bids representing Seville (Spain) and Portorož (Slovenia) were presented and discussed. Whilst each was of an impressively high quality, the bids were strikingly different in style, presenting delegates with an intriguing dilemma. The president conveyed the society's thanks to everyone involved in preparing both bids and expressed regret that one must fail. He encouraged the unsuccessful bidders to try again in the future. In the subsequent vote, Portorož won by 45 votes to 33. Thus, the European mathematical community will gather for ECM8 on the beautiful Slovenian coast, 5–11 July 2020.

The council also heard from organiser Volker Mehrmann on the preparations for ECM7, starting imminently in Berlin. The delegates expressed their enthusiastic thanks to all the local organisers for their tireless efforts and for an exciting meeting in prospect.

### **Committees**

The council next heard reports from the 11 standing committees of the EMS (excluding the executive committee): Applied Mathematics, Developing Countries, Education, Electronic Publishing, ERCOM (Scientific Directors of European Research Centres in the Mathematical Sciences), Ethics, European Solidarity, Meetings, Publications, Raising Public Awareness and Women. The members of these committees carry out many, varied and valuable tasks for the European mathematics community. The council expressed warm gratitude for all their hard work.

### **European Projects**

The president reported on the latest developments around Horizon 2020, with the recent EU open consultation on mathematics due to be discussed in September.

With Jean-Pierre Bourguignon (President of the European Research Council (ERC)) absent, the president also led a discussion on the ERC report, recalling that its inauguration was a successful outcome of lobbying by the Initiative Science Europe (ISE), of which the EMS is a member. With the midterm evaluation of Horizon 2020 due shortly, it is important that the ERC portfolio continues to grow and stabilise over the coming years.

Maria Esteban delivered a presentation on EU-MATHS-IN (the European Service Network of Mathematics for Industry and Innovation), reporting that the national networks that make up EU-MATHS-IN are now active and cooperative. On 15 July, shortly before the council meeting, there was some welcome news that the proposal "Mathematical Modelling, Simulation and Optimization for Societal Challenges with Scientific Computing" had been granted under the Horizon 2020 programme on user-driven e-infrastructure innovation.

The EMS is supporting a bid from Paris to host the International Congress of Mathematicians in 2022. If another serious European bid materialises, the society will support this as well.

Jiří Rákosník gave a presentation on the European Digital Mathematics Library (EuDML), reporting that a Scientific Advisory Board of EuDML with Frédéric Hélein as chair was installed earlier this year. The Encyclopedia of Mathematics ([www.encyclopediaofmath.org](http://www.encyclopediaofmath.org)) was also discussed and Vice-President Martin Raussen delivered a short presentation on a new collaboration between the EMS and MathHire ([www.math-hire.org](http://www.math-hire.org)) to provide a new job portal for recruitment in mathematics.

### **Close**

On behalf of all the delegates and guests, the president expressed the society's appreciation, to the local organisers, to Humboldt University and to those who had assisted by acting as scrutineers for the elections, for a very successful council meeting. He also thanked the delegates and guests for their participation and expressed hope that the discussions and decisions taken over the two days will set the society on a positive trajectory for the next two years.