

**Minutes for 2015 EFAS General Assembly,
Istanbul, Green Park Pendik Hotel
Friday, May 29th, 2015, 17.30- 19.00 hrs**



1. Welcome from Chair:

Jan Wouters welcomes everybody and thanks the hosts for providing an impressive meeting room.

2. Attendance and Apologies:

A doodle calendar was successfully used by 18 (out of 34) member societies which definitely helped to organize the General Assembly in advanced. Three member societies were represented without prior announcement via doodle, 3 member societies were excused and submitted a vote for the president- elect, 2 member societies were represented by members without a formal vote. There is still a number of member societies that have not yet provided feedback about their current contact.

The 21 member societies present were represented as follows:

Austria, Kurt Stephan (Voting), **Belgium**, Jan Wouters (Voting), **Croatia**, Anamarija Veselic (voting), **Finland**, Jukka Kokkonen (voting), **France**, Françoise Sterkers-Artières (nonvoting), **Germany**, Birger Kollmeier (voting), **Great Britain**, Heather Fortnum (nonvoting), **Hungary**, J.G. Kiss (voting), **Ireland**, Theresa Pitt (voting), **Israel**, Joseph Attias (voting), **Netherlands**, Andre Goedegebure (non-Voting), **Norway**, Arne Vik (Voting), **Poland**, Wieslaw Sulkowski (Voting), **Portugal**, Jorge Humberto Martins (voting), **Romania**, Madalina Georgescu (nonvoting), **Russia** (George Tavartkiladze), **Slovenia**, Lea Zupan (nonvoting), **Spain** (Jose Barrajas), **Sweden**, Birgitta

Tengroth (nonvoting), **Switzerland**, Martin Kompis (voting), **Turkey**, Ahmet Atas (voting).

In addition, the following nonvoting members and guests attended the General Assembly:

Nonvoting members and guests:

Belgium, Melina Willems (Guest), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Zorica Pusara (guest), Germany, Ulrich Hoppe (nonvoting), Israel, Limor Lavie (nonvoting), Portugal, Margarida Serrano (nonvoting), Melissa Cravo (Guest), Russia, Maria Boboshko (nonvoting), Spain, Franz Zenker (nonvoting), Switzerland, Norbert Dillier (nonvoting), Turkey, Bulent Serbetcioğlu (nonvoting), Ozlem Konukseven (nonvoting), Gülce Kirael (guest), Fulya Kocyigit (guest).

Moreover, the following member societies voted via E-Mail:

Czech Republic (J. Syka), Lithuania (Uloziene), Greece (Bibas).

3. Minutes of GA in Leuven, Sept 2014:

Notes have been accepted previous to the meeting by an absence of correction following the E-Mail distribution across voting and nonvoting members, and, later on, by publishing them on the EFAS webpage.

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

The EFAS website and a discussion remark from the Turkish society of audiology were included on the agenda under the heading “Any other business”.

5. Chairman’s report

Jan Wouters gave an account on the major activities during his presidency, i. e.:

- Contact with the respective national audiology societies to fill in open positions (mostly for nonvoting members) in order to extend their

involvement in EFAS

- Preparation of the EFAS congress 2015: Many video/telephone conference meetings had to be performed to prepare the conference program, a congress site visit was arranged, and the accreditation via UEMS-EACME was achieved.
- First organizational steps have been taken for the EFAS congress 2017 in Switzerland
- An EFAS workshop on university education in audiology was organized in Leuven in September 2014 and the follow-up EFAS special session on education was organized in Istanbul
- The Work within the EAS working groups on school aged hearing screening and on audiology and intellectual disabilities were supported
- An amendment of the Byelaws was prepared in order to facilitate EFAS internal administration
- An EFAS project grant was awarded to a project on e-audiology (directed by J. Attias, Israel) which was reported about at the EFAS special session on education
- Four EFAS congress scholarships have been approved on by the EFAS board

6. Treasurer's report :

Martin Kompis reported about the financial affairs that has been send to the EFAS auditors in April 2015, covering a period of 9 ½ month due to the dates of the EFAS General Assemblies. The financial situation of EFAS is stable, most of its new income (generated from membership fees of the supporting societies and from contributions/surplus generated by the last EFAS congress) have been spent by supporting EFAS meetings and projects (primarily the EFAS workshop on University Education in Audiology), the EFAS website, Goto meeting internet fees, EFAS conference scholarships and other expenditures, including

bank annual fees. The auditors Arne Vik and Wieslaw Sulkowski report that they have inspected all the materials with care and did not find any objections. They recommend the General Assembly to accept the report which was done by open voting (20 votes, 1 abstain).

7. Report on the ongoing Istanbul Congress 2015:

Ahmet Atas reported about the scientific program which included 7 structured sessions, 1 special session, 3 Satellite Symposia of 3 hearing device manufactures, 18 free paper sessions, 4 poster discussion sessions and 1 EU project meeting.

861 participants registered (during the conference the participation enrolment even exceeded 900), of whom about 250 are from Turkey. From the participants, 577 audiologists and ENT specialists have been counted, approx.. 100 students, 54 representatives of hearing industry, 65 audiology assistants, 33 members of the scientific committee and 39 invited speakers. The support of the sponsors (platinum sponsor: Amplifon, golden sponsors: Med-EL and Cochlear, silver sponsor Advanced Bionics and a number of other supporters are gratefully acknowledged.

On behalf of EFAS and the General Assembly Jan Wouters thanks Ahmet Atas and his team for organizing the very successful conference.

8. Report on progress for the Switzerland Congress in 2017:

Martin Kompis points to the website ([www. Efas2017.org](http://www.Efas2017.org)) and to the congress dated (June 7th -10th , 2017). The Congress center Kursaal Interlaken will be used and there will be no shortage of mountains.

9. EFAS congress scholarships 2015:

Joseph Attias presents the 4 successful candidates who were selected from 9 applicants. It was noted that the information about the possibility to apply for

EFAS congress stipends is not well conveyed in all member countries.

Therefore, Joseph Attias and the EFAS boards ask all member societies to distribute the announcement of congress stipends to all potential candidates.

The following 4 stipendiates shortly presented themselves:

Mrs Gulce Kirazli, Turkey,

Dr. Anna Balakina, Tomsk, Russia

Mrs Zorika Pusara, Bosnia & Herzegovina

Dr. Lavie Limor, Israel

10. Change of EFAS byelaws:

Some minor changes to the byelaws have already been discussed and informally agreed upon by the last General Assembly (replacement of “nomination committee” into “search committee”, “secretary” to “secretary-general”, “council” to “board”). In addition, during the preparation of the current General Assembly it became clear that several inconsistencies and somewhat outdated regulations from the pre-internet times are still in the byelaws. Hence, **the board suggests that the minor changes of names should be performed with the somewhat more extensive changes given below.** Both changes should be pursued together in due time (Note: sufficient time for preparation of the votes for changing the byelaws as well as a quorum of votes is required to perform such changes). The plan therefore is to consent on all changes within the current General Assembly and formally vote on these changes (with appropriate delay between sending out the proposal and formally voting) for the next General Assembly.

The following principles should be implemented in the modified byelaws:

- Decisions should all be taken at the General Assembly meeting, but all representatives can vote (also the ones not present) by an appropriate regulation about E-Mail voting

- Simplification of the deadlines: In the old byelaws, datelines are mentioned that vary between 3, 2, 1 and 0 month prior to the General Assembly. The suggested changes in the byelaws should bring all deadlines down to 1 month, but should also allow for late applications to be possible if the General Assembly agrees upon them.
- Homogenization of voting mechanisms: The old byelaws foresee 3 different voting approaches for conference host, nominee elections and for byelaws amendments. In the new byelaws, the same procedure should be adopted for all voting events.
- E-Mail voting should be introduced for all three mechanisms: In the old byelaws, only for a nominee elections e-mail voting is possible (but no procedure has been outlined in the present byelaws). In the new byelaws, e-mail votes that are received 24 hours before the General Assembly meeting are to be added to the General Assembly votes.
- Homogenize and simplify election criterion: In all votes, the majority of votes should be taken (host of next conference, nominee elections, amendments), whereas in the old byelaws the election criteria differ significantly.

In the short discussion and request for an informal vote about these changes to the byelaws, a consent was reached that these amendments should be performed with the appropriate mechanism for byelaws amendments.

	<u>Action Point</u>	The changes to be voted upon will be send around to the EFAS members in due time in order for them to be decided at the next General Assembly.	Secretary-General
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11. Election of new EFAS board (period 2015-2017):

Ballots were given to the voting representatives from the 21 members to vote on the president-elect, the secretary-general and the treasurer. For the post of president-elect, Francoise Sterkers-Artieres (France) was suggested by the nomination committee. Her CV has been sent to all member societies before. In

addition, Margarida Serrano (Coimbra, Portugal) had been suggested by the Portuguese Audiology Society and was supported by two more member countries. Her CV was also sent around before the General Assembly.

 Decision	The General Assembly accepts that the voting for president-elect is performed on both candidates even though both candidacies were announced later than the required one months prior to the General Assembly.
 Decision	The majority of votes (17 incl. E-Mail-votes) were given to Françoise Sterkers-Artieres (Montpellier, France) who thus has been voted on as president-elect 2015-2017 and EFAS president 2017-2019.

The board and the General Assembly thanks Margarida Serrano (who received 7 votes) for her willingness to serve as a candidate for presidency.

 Decision	B. Kollmeier (in office since 2011) is confirmed in his office as secretary general (20 votes + 1 abstain). Martin Kompis (in office since 2013) is also confirmed in his office as treasurer (19 votes + 2 abstains).
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The officers not to be voted on is the new president Theresa Pitt and the new past-president J. Wouters . Both will stay in the board as officers for two years. The outgoing past-president Kurt Stephan enters the search committee.

12. Voting about EFAS congress location in 2019:

Two bids for 2019 have been prepared and were presented as follows:

The bid for Sweden (central Stockholm) was presented by Birgitta Tengroth (representing Inger Uhlen), the bid by Lisbon, Portugal was presented by Jorge Humberto Martin.

 Decision	The General Assembly voted for Lisbon (16 : 5 votes) as the EFAS congress location in 2019.
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EFAS thanks both bidders for preparing the bid and congratulates the Portuguese delegation.

13. EFAS Working Group on School Age Hearing Screening (SHS, see EFAS web page for a presentation of the current activities):

Jan Wouters reported about the ongoing activity that issued a concrete action for a research project (performed from own resources) with interested partners both within and outside the working group SHS. Optimum screening methodologies for SHS are being developed (such as, e. g. child-friendly digit triplet test, the Dutch ear check in comparison with sound earcheck, a comparison across child age etc). Evidence should be gathered for the necessity of SHS by comparing SHS data with NHS data bases . The first pilot study (performed in a collaboration between Wouter Dreschler, Theresa Pitt and Jan Wouters) can be a step towards a larger international project. Persons, research teams and countries interested either in participating in the SHS working group or in the ongoing self-financed pilot project should contact Jan Wouters.

14. EFAS Working Group on Audiology and Intellectual Disability:

Melina Willems reported about the activities of the working group in order to prepare guidelines (not protocols) for patients with intellectual disabilities for hearing screening as well as assessment, treatment, guidance and rehabilitation both for care givers and for patients. A working group has been established in March 2015 in Bochum and the first step in the procedure (literature review, questionnaire, first version of a guideline) is expected to be delivered in November 2015. See the EFAS webpage for more information.

15. University Education in Audiology:

B. Kollmeier reported about the recent workshop in Leuven in 2015 and the special session within the current EFAS congress. The information on Audiology Education is meanwhile available for 22 countries under the following link:
www.efas.ws/download/Overview_audiology%20programs_Europe_040914.pdf

16. Any other business:

EFAS website: An informal vote among the members present at the GA indicated that they regularly use the EFAS website, primarily for information about internal affairs of EFAS. There was no strong vote from the General Assembly for updating or for adding more live materials, photos, and/or most recent news on the website.

 <u>Action Point</u>	To make the website more attractive and lively, volunteers from the member societies are sought to act as reporters and editors of the website.	
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Minimum standards for Audiological Education Programs: A suggestion by Ozlem Konukseven (Turkish Society of Audiology) should be considered in the future.

Location and date for next General Assembly: For 2016, three possibilities were suggested (Szeged, Hungary, June 12-14, Lake Como, Italy, June 2-4, Ireland, Cork or Dublin, in the second week of September).

 Decision	The General Assembly votes for Ireland (incoming president Theresa Pitt as host and organizer) in the second week of September.
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In June 2017, the General Assembly will be held in Interlaken.

17. Handing over of presidency/Close of meeting:

Jan Wouters thanks everyone for the contributions and hands over the presidency to Theresa Pitt.

Notes prepared by Birger Kollmeier (secretary-general of EFAS).