

The Chairman's Word

Dear members of the ELA,

At the annual meeting in Paris in May 2007, I was elected chairman of the ELA. This is both an honour and privilege for me.

Throughout the years, I have been present at all annual meetings ever since Antwerp in 1994 (I participated in EYLS in Edinburgh in 1993) and I felt it only logical when I joined the board a few years ago as Treasurer.

When I was asked to consider my candidature to the chairmanship, it was essential for me that the other board members as well as the various "task forces" (especially Philippe Jadoul and Charles Mullin) were willing to take a new and very active roll over the coming years and I was very glad – and not surprised – to experience that all were – and continuously are – very supportive by carrying out their respective tasks and responsibilities.

Now that the British Council has stepped down from the scene, it is essential to the ELA that "the officers of the ELA", primarily the board and the national representatives, play an increasingly active roll and we need to be sure that the right people are in "the driving seat" the coming years.

And where will my prime focus be as chairman? Not surprisingly, it will be on the continuous running of EYLS (or a scheme similar hereto) in both London and Edinburgh and we are quite optimistic in this respect even though the funding issue is very challenging. Please see the status report on this from Philippe Jadoul in this newsletter.

Furthermore, I believe that the board should focus on:

- A higher level of communication/networking among the members.
- A web-site that support(s) this at all times.
- A newsletter sent electronically to the members twice a year.
- A higher attendance at all general meetings (an increased focus on the newest members).
- An update of the articles of association that take the new goals of ELA into consideration etc.

I hope that you will be supportive to the coming initiatives and that many of you will take on some of the coming challenges. This will be needed.

Hope to see many of you at the annual meeting in Prague!!

Best regards,

Peter Bisgaard
Chairman



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Is there a future for the EYLS ?

The European Young Lawyers Scheme ("EYLS") has been running for more than 40 years, both in London and in Edinburgh.

The British Council announced in 2006 that it was changing the focus of its activities both as regards subject matters (more towards human rights) and as regards geographical scope (Asia – Africa). As a result of this changed focus, the British Council decided that, as from 2007, it would no longer be able to support and organise the EYLS.

After the initial disappointment, there was a general feeling amongst ELA members that everything should be done in order to try and continue the EYLS in some form or another. This is not only because it is vital to the continued existence of the ELA that new participants can become members of the association in the future, but also and mainly due to the fact that the EYLS is generally considered a very good programme which has proven its value and should not easily be abandoned.

On this basis, the ELA decided to try and establish a new scheme which can succeed to the EYLS. ELA wished to be in the driving seat in this respect, and a task force was set up (consisting mainly of former chairmen of the ELA), to come forward with a proposal both for the short-term and the longer-term continuation of a scheme similar to the EYLS.

A solution was found for 2007 in London, whereby six European lawyers selected by ELA participated in the International Young Lawyers Diploma Program, a similar scheme organised by The Law Society of England and Wales and the College of Law.

We are now looking for a more fundamental solution for 2008 and onwards, both for the London and the Edinburgh part of the scheme.

As regards Edinburgh, Charles Mullin has introduced a proposal with the (new) Scottish government whereby the (Scottish part of the) EYLS would be subsidised by a government grant. The administration is looking at the proposal, and we are hopeful that a (positive) response will be received in the near future.

For London, the situation is more complicated. The College of Law is very willing to continue offering the teaching part of the scheme, and the Law Society of England & Wales is also prepared to assist in the administration of it. However, the big difficulty is – as often – money... London is much more expensive than Edinburgh, and the College of Law asks a fee of 6,000 £ per participant for the teaching. We are now urgently trying to find this amount so as to allow 10 to 20 participants to go to London (as from July 2008 – the course would no longer start in January). We are looking at EU subsidies, and are also talking to potential private sponsors, but so far without success. We are continuing our efforts, but any ideas that you may have to help us in this respect are obviously more than welcome!!

To conclude, we are working hard at trying to find a solution whereby the EYLS can be continued, but we're not quite there yet... For all suggestions or questions, please feel free to contact me. We will also keep you informed of further developments.

Philippe Jadoul
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ELA Annual Meeting in Prague May 1, – May 4, 2008

Dear ELA Member,

It is a pleasure for us to host XXIV. ELA Meeting in Prague, in one of the most beautiful cities in Europe.

When Chris asked me to write a few words about the meeting I decided to skip usual historical overview of the city which you can easily google on internet sites such as www.prague.cz or www.pragueexperience.cz where you can find all about its history and highlighted sights protected by UNESCO and listed in World Heritage Sites. They will also provide the standard tourist information for you. Instead, I rather move directly to the essence of this article which is to make you to come to Prague.

There are hundreds of reasons why to come to this city such as an evening stroll across the Charles Bridge as the sun sets behind the Castle and the last rays are reflected by the Old Town's golden spires or glass of wine in one of Prague trendy bars. And who can forget top quality beer which still costs on average EUR 1 per pint? Prague is just a must and you do not want to miss now!

On the top of that it seems that the British Council and the British Embassy have decided to invite all of us to a function organized by them. And if we are lucky we will even be invited to the Residence of the British Ambassador which by its super location in Prague Castle area, by the quality of their renowned lawn and by amount of gin in tonic you will be treated in your glass can easily be an unforgettable experience.

To make sure that you really enjoy your stay we have prepared a boat trip down Vltava river which will guarantee that you see all the important sights along the river from the right perspective without being disturbed by thousands of tourists in the streets. On the programme there are also visits to Prague beer houses where you can try genuine taste of Pilsner lager beer originating in a nearby home of Pilsner beer – the city of Pilsen. For the “Gala Dinner” function we plan to offer an old fashion but pompous sight where you can drink and dance until the sun rise without noticing the time passing by. Obviously our plan is also to comfort accompanying persons during the working session of the Meeting and ELA AM with a choice of a trip to the medieval castle in the surroundings of Prague or shopping in one of the busy shopping palaces in the city.



In addition to the leisure plan we intend to offer some interesting lectures in the working part of the program with prominent UK speakers promised to be invited by the British Council to tell you things about the law you have not yet heard of.

The accommodation has been pre-booked with a four star hotel „Pyramid“ (pls. see www.hotelpyramida.cz) which is in a walk able distance from the Prague Castle and very accessible from Prague Ruzyně Airport which has become one of the most frequent destinations for normal and low cost flights from most of the European cities and can be easily reached by taxi just in 15-20 minutes. Aside the accommodation services the hotel offers sufficient conference rooms to host both the working sessions as well as ELA AM. As I trust most of you will be accommodated in the Pyramid hotel there will be no pardon to miss the working sessions or the meeting for the fabricated excuses such as “lost in transport” etc.. On the other hand we promise not to start with sessions too early.

I hope that this short invite has made you to sit down with your diary and to call your flight operator to mark down the dates

May 1, – May 4, 2008
the official dates of the
ELA Annual Meeting in Prague!

We are truly looking forward to have you all in Prague.

David Rehak
2008 Prague ELA Annual Meeting Secretary



The board meeting in Oslo 9-11 November 2007

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This autumn's board meeting was held in Oslo, Norway. Both board members, national representatives and other members met on the evening of Friday 9 November for dinner at a sea food restaurant on Aker Brygge. The board meeting itself was held the next day in the centre of Oslo. A number of important issues were thoroughly discussed, but the participants agreed that no matter what will happen with the continuation of the scheme, the organization will continue in some form. Although the situation is serious for the ELA we should not forget to have fun!



The sky was blue and the sun was still shining when the group set off for the Holmenkollen ski jump. We got to the foot of the construction after a relaxing trip with the subway. But that was the end of the rest for the group, for everybody climbed all the way to the top to enjoy the view of the city. Afterwards we tried the ski jump and the down hill skiing simulator. The dinner on Saturday evening was held at Ekebergrestauranten overlooking the city. Some people continued on to a party.

As expected the weekend was a nice and relaxing one with good food, wine and good friends. I am already looking forward to the general annual meeting in the Prague in May.

Siv Elisabeth Hveberg



Editor's Note

Please send any sort of information, articles, gossip etc. My contact details are:

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MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING

HELD ON SATURDAY 10 NOVEMBER 2007 AT THON HOTEL SLOTTSPARKEN, OSLO

In the presence of

the following members of the extended board: Peter Bisgaard (Chairman), Dorthe Christensen (General Secretary), Leonie Rammeloo (Treasurer and NR for the Netherlands), Siv Elisabeth Hveberg (Director), Marianne Fleury (Meeting Secretary 2007), David Rehak (Meeting Secretary 2008), Matthias Zillich (Annual Meeting Supervisor) and Charles Mullin (Special Agent for Scotland and NR for Scotland); the following National Representatives: Anu Tuomola & Peter Nygård (Finland), Anders Haugen (Norway) and Magda Karim Vakil (Portugal); the following members: Cristina Juan, Ellen Kirschbaum and Donald Rennie.

Apologies for absence were received from: Hanif Mohamed (Director), Cristina Koycheva (director), Luis Carreras (Webmaster), Philippe Jadoul (Directory master and chairman for the task force for the continuation of the EYLS); Christian Schröder (Newsletter editor), George Bivolarsky (NR Bulgaria), Robert Dudley (NR for England, Wales & N. Ireland), Simona Gallo (NR Italy), Stefan Wenaweser (NR Liechtenstein) and Markus Hungerbühler (NR Switzerland),

*David
Rehak*

*Elisabeth
Hveberg*



Board approval of the Minutes of the 2007 Paris General Meeting

The draft minutes of the 2007 Paris General Meeting had been circulated by the Secretary on 31.05.2007. There were no comments. **The Board approved the minutes** which will be made available on the website.

Report on 2008 Annual Meeting Prague

David Rehak informed the Board that the most important issue for the planning of the meeting, namely the hotel accommodation, is in place. A pre-reservation has been made at Hotel Pyramida for 140 people (probably with a possibility for rooms for another 20 people, if necessary). This 4-star hotel is in walking distance from the Castle and central Prague. It also has conference facilities where the conference and annual general meeting will take place. Given the low price and the possibility for people to share rooms, David Rehak proposed only to have one hotel. A contract will have to be signed and down payment instalments for the conference rooms should be made in March and April 2008. There will be no down payment for rooms, as the participants will have to offer credit card details for their individual bookings.

David Rehak will be assisted by a professional organising agency which charges a fee of 15% of the budget. The agency can get better prices for some of the venues and activities, and they will also be in charge of the invitation and the conference package.

The British Council is very supportive and has organised a drink at the British Embassy. They will also hold two get-togethers for the Czech members in December and January, and David Rehak hopes to get assistance from other members for the organisation of the meeting.

David Rehak outlined the programme which will also include the Board Meeting (possibly at the Law Society), a working session (possibly on the Legal profession in the extended Europe), a boat trip and a gala dinner with a live band.

The Board discussed the theme(s) for the working session. Donald Rennie proposed a Scottish speaker for the suggested topic and will follow-up on this with David Rehak.

The Board approved the plans for the meeting and **empowered David Rehak to sign the contract with the hotel on behalf of the ELA when Peter Bisgaard later had given his written approval hereof.**

It was agreed that a **reminder** about the meeting should be **sent to all members in December 2007**. The programme should be finalised mid-January 2008 so that the **invitation could be sent out by the end of January 2008**. This would also make it possible to set a deadline for the booking of rooms by end March 2008.

Report Zürich Annual Meeting 2009

Peter Bisgaard referred to the report from Markus Hungerbühler, Meeting Secretary 2009, indicating that preparations for the Zürich Annual General Meeting are progressing well. The Board agreed with the outline for the meeting.

Accounts of 2007 Annual Meeting Warsaw

Marianne Fleury informed the Board that the result of the 2007 Annual Meeting was a deficit of 1.252 EUR, in particular caused by an underestimation of side-costs such as coffee breaks and metro tickets. She will **transfer the deposit** of 11.000 EUR after deduction of the deficit **to the Treasurer.**

Peter Bisgaard noted that the Board had expected a certain deficit from the Paris meeting given the relatively low number of participants. Although the aim should be break-even or a modest surplus, for certain meetings a minor deficit is hard to avoid. He stressed the importance for meeting organisers of having the right budgeting tool. He thanked the Paris meeting secretaries for a highly enjoyable meeting.

Venue for Annual Meeting 2010

Peter Bisgaard informed the Board that no concrete proposal for a venue for the Annual Meeting 2010 has yet been received. At the Paris meeting, Bilbao was mentioned as a possibility, but it has not been confirmed.

Leonie Rammeloo suggested **putting a notice in the March newsletter inviting proposals for the venue for the Annual Meeting 2010.**

Peter Bisgaard proposed that the **future events in the ELA should be listed at the last page of newsletter. Time and Venue of Board Meeting Autumn 2008**

At the Paris Board Meeting, it was agreed to have the Board Meeting in the autumn 2008 in Sofia. **Peter Bisgaard noted that he will follow-up on these plans with George Bivolarsky and Christina Koycheva.** It was agreed to hold the meeting in November 2008, if possible.

Chairman's Report

Peter Bisgaard gave his report of the Board's activities since the election in May 2007. It has been the intention to set up an efficient board and to form task forces for special issues. This has been quite successful, but there is still progress to be made. In particular, it is necessary to respect the deadlines that the Board fixes for its work. The monthly conference calls are important to make this happen. All interested members are welcome to join these calls and can ask Peter Bisgaard to be put on the mailing list.

The intention is to issue a newsletter twice a year. At present, it should be kept rather simple with focus on pictures and minutes of the last meeting and dates for upcoming events.

The Board discussed the possibility of using the newsletter for more focussed networking purposes (e.g. presentations of individual members and setting up of special networks for members with certain specialities) and for more substantial professional contributions. **Peter Bisgaard will contact some members to inquire whether they would be interested in being in charge of getting professional contributions** for the newsletter and possibly the conferences. This issue will be discussed at the next conference call.

ELA Task Force – New European Young Lawyers' Scheme

Peter Bisgaard informed the Board of a report from Philippe Jadoul who unfortunately could not be present at the Board Meeting. There has not been substantial progress since the Paris Board meeting, the key point still being the funding of the scheme. Contact has been made with the European Commission which manages programmes which might be able to provide funding for the EYLS. However, it is unlikely that European funding, if any, can be obtained quickly. The objective is to start programmes in London and Scotland next summer, but this plan will have to be reviewed on the basis of the funding situation.

For **London**, the College of Law has so far been unsuccessful in finding funding from the law societies and law firms. At present, the only available funding is the money from the British Council.

As regards **Edinburgh**, Charles Mullin explained that there is still no clarification whether the funding application made to the Scottish Executive will go through. The general financial situation of the Scottish Executive has just been clarified with less means being available than predicted which will most likely lead to some projects not being funded. The President of Scottish Law Society will raise the issue with the Minister of Justice. There is support from important organisations and individuals who would contribute to the running of the scheme, but funding is crucial. A decision should be taken fairly soon for getting academics in place in time.

The Board discussed alternative funding sources such as private or public trusts. Donald Rennie undertook to look into alternative funding possibilities.

Peter Bisgaard noted that the ELA needs to find funding for the EYLS which can ensure the continuation of the scheme for several years. For the 2008 Scheme, a decision will have to be taken by the end of January 2008 whether it should go ahead with the few candidates whom the ELA can pay for with the money from the British Council. The alternative will be to ask the British Council if this money can be transferred to 2009 with a view to finding supplementary alternative funding so that a larger group of participants can be funded. Leonie Rammeloo remarked that the participants

in the 2007 Scheme had been very satisfied with the Scheme and the group, but surprised of the small size of the group. The number of participants should in principle not be less than 10. The Board agreed on the proposed line and that a decision should be taken by the end of January 2008. Christina Koycheva and Elisabeth Hveberg will actively assist Philippe Jadoul in the work, especially on the funding. Peter Bisgaard stressed the fact that even though the continuation of the EYLS is very important to the ELA, it remains secondary to the networking activities, including the organisation of interesting and enjoyable meetings which should remain the core business of the ELA. It is important that the Board passes on the message that the ELA will continue to exist, regardless of whether the ELA is successful in continuing the EYLS

The Board discussed alternative ways of getting new members. This issue should be addressed at the Prague General Meeting. Preparation of a discussion will start at the next conference call.



Charles Mullin

3 year plan for the Board

Peter Bisgaard presented a preliminary draft of a 3 year-plan for the board. It is a lightweight business plan for internal and external purposes indicating the most important and measurable objectives. The intention is that the plan should be dynamic and undergo review over time. In principle, it should be discussed at every autumn board meeting.

Peter Bisgaard **invited the Board members to make their comments**. The document, possibly amended, should **be discussed at the next conference call**. When finalised, the document should be published in the newsletter.

New Articles of Association for the ELA

Dorthe Christensen informed the Board that due longer travels by Hanif Mohamed and Ariane Goffin, it had unfortunately not been possible to finalise draft new Articles of Association for a discussion at the Board Meeting.

She outlined certain issues which have to be reviewed, such as the objectives, the different kinds of membership, update of the countries involved, the composition of the board etc. A new question concerning membership has been raised. further to the receipt of applications from Korean lawyers who participated in the programme at the College of Law together with the EYLS participants. These applications have so far been rejected as inadmissible on the basis of the current Articles of Association, but the possibility of accepting applications from such fellow participants should be considered.

Peter Bisgaard noted that the objective should be broadly drafted. The whole review should be kept as simple as possible Dorthe Christensen confirmed that the new Articles of Association should be distributed to the members one month before the Annual General Meeting. She therefore proposed to present new draft statutes to the task force in the beginning of January and to discuss this draft at the January conference call. This was accepted by the Board.



Anu Tuomola

Cristina Juan Vidal

Peter Nygaard

Leonie Rammeloo informed the Board that she and Peter Bisgaard are currently carrying out the treasurer tasks together. The ELA's bank has insisted on certain formalities further to her appointment as treasurer. These should be completed soon.

The invoice for the 2007 fee was sent out in October 2007. Leonie Rammeloo plans to send a reminder (with the invoice) towards the end of November 2007.

She undertook to examine whether a budget could be presented at the next Annual General Meeting.



Arnt Angell

National Representatives

Dorthe Christensen informed the Board that Robert Dudley informally acts as Nat.Rep. for England, Wales and N. Ireland until he can be formally elected by the General Meeting. Furthermore, for personal reasons, Spyridon Antonelos has stepped down as Nat.Rep. for Greece. Markos Perrakis has accepted to be in charge of the fee collection for Greece.

Dorthe Christensen will follow-up with Nat.Reps. further to the Treasurer's reminder concerning fee collection.

Directory, Newsletter, Website and New Members

Directory

Peter Bisgaard emphasised the importance of having correct email addresses for all members as all communication is done electronically. He invited Dorthe Christensen and Matthias Zillich to look into whether **the future General Meeting Year Ambassadors could participate in the search for correct email addresses.**

Newsletter

As decided by the Board, **the next issue of the newsletter** which was delayed **should be sent out very shortly**. Peter Bisgaard asked Matthias Zillich to send pictures of the Oslo meeting to Christian Schröder as soon as possible. Luis Carreras has already posted pictures of the Paris meeting on the website. Dorthe Christensen will draft the minutes as soon as possible so that they can be included in the issue. Elisabeth Hveberg will revise her short article on the Oslo meeting.

For the **March issue**, Leonie Rammeloo will provide **short notice on travel costs**, as requested at the Paris General Meeting.

Website

The Board agreed that the ELA website is now working well.

New members

Dorthe Christensen informed the Board that four new members from the 2007 group have joined the Association since the Paris meeting. She will contact Philippe Jadoul about addressing the remaining two participants about membership.

ELA Year Ambassadors

Dorthe Christensen explained that a draft list of possible candidates for ELA Year Ambassadors has been drawn up. **It will be distributed with the draft minutes**. The Board members should make their remarks and suggestions.

The Board decided that the **March newsletter should include a profile of all ELA Year Ambassadors** (their name, profession and picture).

Honorary members

Elisabeth Hveberg presented a list of the honorary members of the Association and of the proposals of candidates for honorary membership. She described the background for the candidatures.

The Board agreed to discuss the issue at the next conference call on the basis of summary information on all candidates, to be prepared by the people who have made proposals and to be collected by Elisabeth Hveberg, in the light of the efforts being made for the continuation of the scheme.

Any other business

No other issue was raised.

In fidem:



Peter Bisgaard
Chairman



Dorthe Christensen
General Secretary