

Report on the Meeting of Presidents of Mathematical Societies, in Aarhus

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Please refer to the separate list for attendance.

Presentations marked like this* are available on the web site.

Section A: Preliminaries

Marta Sanz-Solé, President of the European Mathematical Society, welcomed everybody to the meeting and thanked the organisers very much for the invitation to Aarhus during the Mathematical Weekend being held there.

Section B: Introductions

- B1** Everybody present introduced themselves, saying which Society they represented.
- B2** Bjarne Toft gave a presentation* of the history and recent activity of the Danish Mathematical Society.

Section C: The European Mathematical Society

- C1** Marta Sanz-Solé gave her report* as President of the EMS, after which there was a brief discussion and explanation of the system whereby people can join the EMS through their national mathematical societies. Volker Mehrmann remarked that the EMS could consider making more use of funding from foundations.
- C2** Marta Sanz-Solé announced the EMS Council in Donostia (San Sebastián), June 28–29, 2014, noting in particular that there will be vacancies on the Executive Committee to be filled at the Council. Andre Ran commented that it was not a good idea that the three main officers (President, Treasurer, and Secretary) are replaced all at the same time. Immediately following the Council, there will be a Joint Congress between Spanish and Italian Societies in Bilbao from June 30 to July 4, sponsored by the EMS.

C3 The call for proposals for several types of scientific activity supported by the EMS was explained, and the activities in 2013 listed. Decisions about the Scientific and Prize Committees for the 7ECM in Berlin in 2016 are to be taken soon. The EMS has been approaching various foundations for co-funding of its series of summer schools.

C4 Committees

- Arne Jensen, Chair of the Ethics Committee, reported on developments since the adoption of the code of practice by the EMS Executive Committee. It has already been adopted by Spanish, Croatian, Italian, and Cyprus Societies. Arne urged the other Societies to adopt the code and to inform him and the EMS about such decisions.
- Michel Waldschmidt, Chair of the Committee for Developing Countries, presented the aims and activities of the committee, in particular the scheme for Emerging Regional Centres of Excellence. The next annual meeting of the committee will be on April 20 in Linköping.

C5 Martin Raussen gave an oral presentation of the EMS web site:
www.euro-math-soc.eu

C6 Opening the discussion of mathematics research in Europe, Marta Sanz-Solé reported* on negotiations concerning Horizon 2020, the Initiative for Science in Europe petition supporting the ERC and in particular the funding of curiosity driven research, proposals sent to DG Connect, and the list of experts for evaluation of projects in mathematics, among other things.

Gregoire Allaire remarked that the ISE petition was not always popular, because it was seen as too elitist. Nicola Bellomo commented that participation from industry is now a condition of research programs, and asked that we insist on re-establishing the old research training schools and networks.

Mats Gyllenberg reported that the European Science Foundation is winding down, to be closed by the end of 2015. The scientific committees have been closed, replaced by smaller committees responsible for “terminal care”. There will be no new calls. ScienceEurope has chosen the chairs of six of its committees. Bent Norden (a chemist) is the chair of the ScienceEurope Committee for Physical, Chemical and Mathematical Sciences. The members of this committee have not yet been chosen.

Section D: Panel Discussions

D1 Günter Törner gave a presentation* introducing the subject of mathematics curricula in secondary school. In the discussion afterwards the following points were made.

- There is no organisation at the European level influencing curricula within all European countries, and nor is there a European standard of competencies, or of knowledge. Indeed standardization is not even something to aim for.
- A lot of trainee mathematics teachers try to avoid “hard” mathematics, and a lot of practising mathematics teachers know very little mathematics, especially if they come from faculties of education. Instead, teachers should be well educated and passionate about their subject. They should have high status and salary.
- Industrialists are worried about the lack of mathematical knowledge and reasoning skills among their employees, and call for training courses. Perhaps we should work to support the continuing education of teachers, via a European summer school for teachers.
- Any emphasis on standardized tests tends to distort the whole system.

D2 Bernard Teissier gave a report on the first meeting of the Publications Committee, noting the following, among other things.

- Gold open access is dangerous, giving access more to visibility than to science. Are there other solutions?
- Elsevier and Springer have bought data mining companies.
- We should try to work with libraries and librarians.

In the discussion afterwards the following points were made.

- Peer review is very important, but in danger. The assessment of the quality of a paper will be tainted by financial considerations. In addition, there are too many journals, especially those of lower quality. Our concern about prices should not divert us from the importance of the quality of the publications.
- In which ways does open access influence the way people behave? There are many subtle issues; for example, would you have to pay again for an erratum? The French declaration *Open Access: a warning on the inherent flaws of the author pays model* identifies good practice.
- There is another form of open access, where libraries pay only for the added-on services (metadata, preservation, and so on). Also, the EU OpenAIRE repository for open publication may be more durable than arXiv.

<https://www.openaire.eu>

- Funding agencies will require open access, but will probably accept green open access.
- Marta Sanz-Solé gave a brief report on the EMS publishing house. There will be an Editorial on this in the June issue of the Newsletter. 100 books have been published, and there are 14 journals, 7 of them owned by EMS. 290 bundled packages of journals are sold, and there are 2000 individual subscriptions. EMS members have free online access to *JEMS*, which is to be extended to all journals owned by the EMS. Files can be deposited on home web pages after publication. ICTP gives free online access for underdeveloped countries. The prices are 0.31 euros per page for *JEMS*, and 0.38 for *Commentarii Mathematici Helvetici*. The code of practice has been adopted. There is no gold open access (so far).

Section E: Any Other Business

- Lucian Beznea presented* the Joint Meeting of the American and Romanian Mathematical Societies on June 27–30 in Alba Iulia
<http://imar.ro/ams-ro2013/description.php>
- Gregory Makrides presented* Le-MATH “Learning mathematics through new communication factors”, and he also talked about EUROMATH 2013.
- Nicola Bellomo reported on the conference in Bilbao from June 30 to July 4 2014. It will be large, and at a high scientific level. The EMS will appoint a distinguished speaker, and the 2014 EMS lecturer will be invited to lecture there.
- Volker Mehrmann presented* EU-MATHS-IN, which follows up the “Forward Look” on Mathematics in Industry.
- Miguel Abreu reported that videos from the Khan Academy have been translated into Portuguese. He then showed the preliminary English version of the first episode of “Isto é Matemática” (This is Mathematics). The first series of thirteen episodes will be available in English at

<http://www.mathematics-in-europe.eu/>

This had been proposed to the EMS Raising Public Awareness Committee by Jorge Buescu, and had their support together with that of Munich RE, who will sponsor the translation. As soon as they are broadcast by the Portuguese news channel SIC Notícias, the original portuguese episodes will be made available at

<http://www.youtube.com/user/istoematematica>

Section F: Next Meeting

Betül Tanbay, President of the Turkish Mathematical Society, invited us to Istanbul for the next meeting, probably to be on the first weekend of April 2014. All present expressed their gratitude in a round of applause.

Section G: Closing

On behalf of all the participants, Marta Sanz-Solé thanked the local organisers of this meeting for their excellent preparation and hospitality and their warm welcome.