

## Minutes of the Ordinary General Assembly

**Date and time:** August 25<sup>th</sup> 2001, 15:00 - 17:00

**Location:** Budapest, Hungary

**Those ACC members present:**

John Petersen, Chairperson  
László Dani, Deputy Chairperson  
Linda Jakobsone, Board Member  
Ágota Illyés  
Barna Kovács  
Rubén Marcos del Blanco  
Iulian Catalui  
Kim Johannsen  
Márta Szilágyi

**The documents sent out in advance:**

- Agenda
- Enclosure 1: Proposal to point 4 of the agenda
- Enclosure 2: Proposal to point 6 of the agenda
- Enclosure 3: Budget 2001
- Enclosure 4: Accounts 2000

**1. Election of the chair of the assembly and of a secretary**

John Petersen opened the GA and welcomed everybody. Barna Kovács was elected to be the chair and Márta Szilágyi to be the secretary of the GA. No modifications were proposed to the agenda.

**2. Statement of the chairperson of the board**

John began his statement with the information that similarly to last year there would be again an annual with a written statement issued and sent to the members.

'Schools for Europe' series:

Two events mark the beginning and ending of this headline; the Final Editorial Conference in November 2000, and the Schools for Europe Community College that would take place in December 2001. (More details about them later on in the statement.)

Organizational issues:

- Office:

The office ceased to be located in the IT-Folk High School in Snoghøj, and the different tries to establish it in Brussels, then in Ryslinge Højskole failed, in the end an agreement was made with Højskolen Østersøen for a rental fee of 25,000 Danish kronen/year.

- Becoming an associate in the AWE:

In harmony with the decision made by the last year's GA, on April 7<sup>th</sup> 2001 the AWE adopted the ACC as an associate, thus the ACC became one of the 25-30 chapters.

- EVS volunteer:

From July 1<sup>st</sup> 2001 Rubén Marcos del Blanco works in the office for half a year as the first volunteer. From February 1<sup>st</sup> 2002 a new volunteer is needed.

- Board:

The Board is functioning well, apart from the fact that they lost contact to Oleg Diatkevich, probably due to his health problems. Thus he is not running for renewing his position in the Board.

- GA in Frisia:

It could not be realized due to the lack of finances.

- New version of the website:

Rubén was revising its content in order to make the projects, reports, etc. available to the members.

- Membership:

There are 170 members and Rubén was preparing statistics about their country-composition, etc.

- Youth 2002:

The ACC is a co-founder of a new organization, Youth 2002, with three other associations and thirteen Folk High Schools. In the Board of the Youth 2002 there are four board members representing the associations and four representing the Folk High Schools. In the meaning of the ACC Board's decision made in May, the ACC is represented by Elly Andersen in the Board of the Youth 2002. More details will be told about the project later.

#### Activities:

- Last autumn an exchange program was carried out partly by the ACC, which made it possible for Latvian and Lithuanian young people to participate in an IT course in Snoghøj Folk High School. John also mentioned that two Latvian participants were just running an IT course in Rite, thus, though it cannot be considered a key ambition to the ACC, was a successful project, on which further projects can be built.

- On the FEC in November, an issue of 'Das House-The House-Le Maison' Magazine was prepared and then sent to each ACC member.

- In April Mjellma Mehmeti, Linda Jakobson, John, László Dani and partly Jesper Nielsen and Rex Schade were participating in a conference in Denmark that was in a part the annual assembly of the AWE where the ACC was adopted as an associate. It means a great possibility to establish new contacts. John mentioned explicitly the Folk High School Academy in Sopron, Hungary, who are open to cooperate with the ACC.

- Another exchange program, the East-West/ 'European Week' took place in Latvia organized by Klubs Maja (Club the House), more respectively Sanda Serafinovica, who is an active ACC member also. Through the project ten young Danes visited Folk High Schools in Latvia, and Kim Johannsen who was one of the participants said that the Latvian students were very interested in the discussions about the EU, NATO, about Latvia's role in the EU, about folk high schools in Latvia.

- The two-week Transylvanian Community College in June-July was one of the most prestigious projects of ACC and we would like to thank it to Ágota Illyés and Barna Kovács and to encourage them to continue. John emphasized that the event received a lot of media coverage, which in the promotion of a civic dialogue has a great importance. Barna supplemented it by saying that there would be an AWE journal issue printed about the TCC, also as a contribution by the ACC to the activities of the AWE, and they would prepare a CD-ROM about the program with photos, also an ACC poster would be

made and a 40-minute documentary with interviews with the lecturers and the participants. It will also be put on a CD and then sent to the members with the other materials. A website like the one about Rite should also be made after some small modifications on the CD-ROM. They supposed that by the middle of September everything mentioned would be finished.

- In the end John listed those places where the ACC participants had the chance to make a presentation or issue an article. These were: Italy, Denmark, Strasbourg, Lisbon, Lyon, Latvia, Romania, etc.

#### Political lobby issues:

- The ACC has made proposals to the EU in three different contexts; in the consultation on youth politics, on lifelong learning and on non-formal education. As regards the first, a 'white paper' will be released by the Commission. NGOs were asked from all over Europe. The ACC has submitted almost identical proposals, the essence of which was that we regard it as a 'good practice', worth following, that the Danish Ministry of Education makes an exception from under the applicable general rule when it supports by law the Højskolen Østersøen, though the participants are foreigners.

There would be a conference on lifelong learning in Brussels in September where Mjellma would represent the ACC.

- Youth 2002:

As John mentioned earlier, the Youth 2002 is an organization with one single aim, to carry out the project Youth 2002. The project is about gathering 1000 young people from Europe and hosting them in 13 folk high schools in Denmark for a three-week stay where they would draft a constitution for the future Europe in the context of the debate on globalization and on the eastern enlargement. The project has a huge budget of almost 3 million Euros. The Danish Ministry of Education hopefully supports the project in one-third even though the participants will not be Danish. The reason for this is that Denmark takes over the EU presidency in July and though it is a purely European project, the government could in this way present it as a somehow Danish project.

The ACC's contribution to this is first of all some of the main ideas. The Board wrote a letter to the Danish Minister of Education in July 2000 proposing that the folk high school system should be presented in a European context during the EU-presidency. Some people at 'higher levels' became familiar with this proposal and presented it to the Minister. Another letter was then written by the AWE and sent to all the folk high schools, which contained that even if they have foreign students, they could get dispensation. This lobby work seems to have worked effectively.

The other aspect of the project is of financial nature; the second one-third should be supported by the EU, through a budget line that would invite projects dealing with sharing ideas, new methods, etc., but unfortunately there is no guarantee for this. The project, however, will live on, as the 13 schools have already programs on different subjects such as the handicapped people's view on Europe, the European regions' view on Europe, etc. For this latter the TCC can be a model. John has given the project description of the EU/Development Community College Course drafted by Jette Nielsen to the only one purely international folk high school in Denmark, the International People's College. Moreover, the European Charter Community College will eventually take place in Snoghøj IT-folkehøjskole.

John finally told the GA that he himself - together with Søren Winther Lundby- is personally employed in the project at its Secretariat.

Future:

The future has already begun since many projects have been drafted.

- The finances are given for the School for Europe Community College that will take place in December.
- Maria Bakari is working on a Rhodes Community College on multiculturalism - intercultural learning and also has ideas about a conference in Nottingham.
- Beatrice Paviout who was a participant of the TCC plans to organize a community college on xenophobia and immigrant issues in Europe.
- Alessandro Gori, an Italian member living in Catalonia would like to a further issue of Das Haus magazine about peace initiatives in Europe.
- For a Das Haus issue there is another initiative from Estonia.
- There are plans for a three-week Baltic Community College in the context of the EU enlargement.
- There should be some cooperation with the Sopron Folk High School in Hungary.
- Jürgen Klaassen, a teacher in Hannover, an ex-Østersøen teacher has drafted many projects, among which one is about how to combine the residential school idea with distant learning.
- Rhisiart Talebot, Sophie Rich-Degeneve and Robert Simmons are working on the Cornwall project but they face difficulties in the fundraising.
- As for the future of the TCC, Barna said that they would like to continue it for three succeeding years and depending on its success they would consider to make it a permanent community college.
- The idea of the Frisian Community College failed due to the lack of funds, but there will be new attempts in this respect.
- There was also an idea to organize a conference in Northern Italy together with the AWE, which also failed, but there will be made one more application.
- The Italy Community College organized by Eva remains on the agenda, but was postponed to December 2002.
- A proposal has been made by Ljupco Efremov, a Macedonian member for a Balkan Community College.
- Mjellma's MCC project organized by her NGO with the ACC as a cooperator is to take place between 12-19 September, though the actual realization is still doubtful due to the difficult political situation.
- As regards an old project, Linda said that the Apple project in Rites Tautas Augstskola (Rite Folk High School, Latvia) has been carried on. Summer camps for children were organized where letters to prospective godparents were written. The ACC Latvia has furthermore other ideas and plan to continue the Apple campaign until Christmas around Europe. Linda has become a board member of Rite. She has also mentioned that the look of the school considerably improved after last year's working camp and it remains a high priority for Rite to maintain the cooperation with ACC.
- The ACC would like to continue the cooperation with Jesper for the Minority Course 2002 and have a larger section in it than this year. It will though depend on the funding.
- In relation to the Youth 2002 project, ACC as a host organization should provide one-one volunteer to the thirteen folk high schools for half a year who in their respective languages would collect materials, thus would form a data-base about the discussions that go on in the different countries about the EU enlargement, about globalization and

about the EU-constitution. In this way they could find out how then the constitution-debate should go.

*Summary:* The efforts of the ACC in creating a common European civic dialogue have impressed a lot of people, at least in Denmark. We do not really have information about their reception in other countries. It is however indisputable that the establishment of the community colleges of Europe can only succeed with the involvement of Danish or Nordic politicians.

As for the financial situation of the ACC, our expectations for funding from the EU failed. Seemingly the EU is reluctant to finance small NGOs. It can affect the office, because it is doubtful if we can continue paying the office rent. The board will have a discussion about it.

### **3. Presentation and adopting of the accounts**

John presented the accounts on the authorization of Jesper, the ACC's treasurer. Both the accounts for 2000 and the budget for 2001 were sent out in advance. John has made a remark to the 'sale' item. To some American journals leaflets have been sent, and the ACC also received some share for the Visions for Europe conference; this is how we have an income. The ACC has 9,000 Euros on the Danish- and 2,500 Euros on the German account, John just mentioned it for the information of the GA. The budget is a sort of survey of what have been done, the salaries are in-kind, not actual amounts. The GA unanimously adopted the accounts.

### **4. Election of board members**

An enclosure to this point of the agenda has been sent out in advance.

Barna explained that four members should be elected to the board since the mandate of four members are running out, that of Mjellma Mehmeti, John Petersen, László Dani and Siebren de Boer. Siebren decided to withdraw but run for a position as substitute. The Board lost contact to Oleg Diatkevich, thus he does not run for a position.

The Board proposed the following candidates for the positions as board members: Mjellma Mehmeti, Ágota Illyés, John Petersen and László Dani.

It was stated that no other proposals have been submitted within the deadline prescribed by the statutes.

As there were four candidates for the four board member positions and two candidates for the two substitute positions, Barna stated that there is no need for voting, the four new board members are Mjellma, Ágota, John and László and Siebren and Éva Valvo became substitutes.

### **5. Election of the auditor**

John informed the GA that the ACC's current auditor, Lene Albrechtsen is running for reelection.

Barna stated that the GA elected the auditor for another year.

### **6. Proposals received**

Linda presented the proposal of the board that is concerned with the membership fee and similarly to the other enclosures has been sent out in advance.

The board proposed to change the current system of paying the 10-Euro per year membership fee, because the commission to be paid through bank transfers were often



higher than this amount. So, the idea came to send to the ACC office a postcard instead. The new members, however, will have to pay for the first year of membership, and the other members can also make financial contribution on a voluntary basis.

The GA voted and adopted unanimously the proposal of the board.

Barna made a suggestion for a practical doing, about how this should be announced to the members. He proposed that Rubén could inform the members about this change.

**7. The board makes public the site of next year's ordinary general assembly**

John admitted that the Board has not discussed it yet, but he was thinking about it and as 1000 young Europeans will be in Denmark anyway for the Youth 2002, it would be a good idea to organize the GA there or maybe in Frisia, in August 2002.

**8. Any other business**

No comments, proposals, etc. were made.

**9. Adopting the minutes**

The General Assembly adopted the minutes.

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Kovács Barna, Chairperson of the GA  
the GA

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Szilágyi Márta, Secretary of

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John Petersen, Chairperson of the ACC  
ACC

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Dani László, Deputy Chairperson of the